



ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN DISSERTATION

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**INVESTIGATING YOUTH'S IDENTITY AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO BUILT  
FORM:** A proposal for a youth orientated lifestyle centre for Kokstad.

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SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE TO THE  
SCHOOL OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF KWA-ZULU NATAL

2015

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**ABSTRACT:**

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Youth's identity is an important developmental process of a young person's life. The nature in which this takes place today is one which opens the door to an architectural intervention that has the potential to both facilitate and improve this process. This study looks, in detail, at the metaphoric representation of the 'streets' as the current place where the youth spend their time developing and testing their identity. The research focuses specifically on the youth in a town called Kokstad, on the southern border of Kwa-Zulu Natal, as a case specific application of this idea to ultimately lead into the design of a youth-orientated Lifestyle Centre for Kokstad; A design that articulates how youth's identity can impact architecture in a manner that then benefits youth's identity development. Simply stated, the intention is to inform an architecture that responds to the youth's identity; reanimating the essence of the 'streets' through architecture.

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**DECLARATION:**

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## **COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**

### **DECLARATION - PLAGIARISM**

I, ....., declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
  - a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced
  - b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks, and referenced.
5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

Signed

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**DEDICATION:**

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“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” – Jeremiah 29:11

I dedicate this to God my Father, Jesus Christ the author and perfecter of my faith and the Holy Spirit without whom, I would not be where I am today.

Thank you!

---

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

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I would like to thank the following people who all played an active and instrumental role in my ability to complete this dissertation:

Firstly my Family,

I thank each of you for playing a part in this journey with me. To my mom and dad, thank you for your love and encouragement and especially supper! To my sister thank you for the coffee and the support. To my twin brother, thank you for all your assistance throughout this journey and for our healthy competition that has allowed me to always do better. To my second family, the Gills, thank you, also, for your love and encouragement. Thank you for allowing me to stay with you whilst working on this dissertation in Kokstad and thank you for playing an instrumental role in the contents of this research. To Shé Diana-Fay Gill, I love you and thank you for sticking by my side, for loving me, encouraging me and for just being you. Though far away, you are always in my heart and you have made a huge difference.

Secondly to my Supervisor,

Mr Majahamhle Mthethwa, thank you for your assistance in this research, I would not have been able to complete this document without your help. Your critiques on the contents of my dissertation were always exemplary.

To my Mentors,

Mr George Elphick and Nick Proome of EPA, thank you for all our critique sessions and for your great suggestions which have been much appreciated during the design stage of this dissertation.

To all my friends,

I wish I could list you all individually but there are too many of you and for that I am truly grateful! Thank you to my group of friends studying with me who have always been there to assist me and encourage me, you are all awesome people. To my friends at Church, thank you for all your support and for the much needed soccer breaks on a Sunday.

To the Youth in Kokstad whom I had the privilege of speaking to,  
Thank you all for sharing your wisdom with me.

Finally I would also like to say thank you, in general, to a long list of others who have not been mentioned but also played an important role in assisting me.

It would have been a long and difficult road without all of you!

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## **CHAPTER 1 | INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1. INTRODUCTION:**

### **1.1.1. BACKGROUND:**

The streets of a city have long served a vital role in connecting people and places. In today's context they are seen as little more than a conduit for cars but they were not always seen this way. Streets were once the heart of a community; places where people came to shop, enjoyed walking and interacting with one another and children played. The experience was enriching for all users and added an incredible amount of value to the city.

Although, in many places, the character of the streets has been lost, the essence of these spaces still exists but in different forms. The term 'streets' in this study is used as a metaphor to refer to the essence of a street as an outdoor or public space where people (or youth as in this case) can be found; a space that allows people to connect and hang-out with others (Matthews, et al, 2000). Youth's presence and activities in these spaces highlight some important aspects surrounding their search for their own identity, both socially (among their peers) and culturally (within society).

### **1.1.2. MOTIVATION/JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY:**

Youth's identity refers to the process of development which plays an important role in the lives of young people as they begin to determine their sense of belonging and uniqueness (Kroger, 2003 and Marcia, 1980). The issue of youth's identity, more specifically the youth's search for identity, is one that is not commonly or adequately addressed by the built environment. This is especially true for Kokstad where, unlike other more developed towns and cities in South Africa, the built environment provides very little access to spaces that address the youth in Kokstad and their search for their own identity.

It is for this reason that, for a lot of the youth living in the town area, the 'streets' exist as a space where they can escape the boundaries of home or school in search of their own identity. "To these young people the street constitutes an important cultural setting, a lived space where they can affirm their own identity and celebrate their feelings of belonging (Matthews, Taylor, Percy-Smith, et al, 2000)."

This research seeks to understand youth's identity by exploring the nature of youth's search for their own identity through their presence and activities in the 'streets'. The goal of this

study is to use this research as a tool to inform an architecture that responds to youth's identity; reanimating the essence of the 'streets' in architecture.

## **1.2. DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:**

### **1.2.1. DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM:**

Consideration for the needs of the youth, oftentimes, does not extend physically beyond the home and a good school. Society understands that a good education is imperative and most parents do the best they can to provide a good home but as children become teenagers they begin to start searching for their own identity, where they fit in socially and culturally. This process is crucial as they begin to enter into adulthood.

It is for this reason that the youth need and desire spaces that allow some level of freedom to develop their own identity that is not limited to the boundaries set up by their parents and school teachers. These spaces need not to be isolated from society, but rather integrated into it so that the youth can find their place among their peers and the rest of society also. The problem is that the built environment, in Kokstad specifically, does not adequately provide these kinds of spaces for the youth and so the youth turn to the 'streets'. This research intends to engage this active phenomenon as a means to question the current state of the built environment and suggest architectural responses that adequately provide for the youth, specifically in their search for their own identity.

### **1.2.2. AIM:**

The aim of this research is to understand and emphasize youth's identity by exploring how youth's search for identity in the 'streets' can impact the built form. The intention is to use this study to inform an architecture that responds to the youth's identity; reanimating the essence of the 'streets' through architecture.

### **1.2.3. OBJECTIVES:**

1. To understand youth's identity.
2. To understand the relationship between the youth's identity and streets' as a place of expression.
3. To examine the presence and activities of the youth in the 'streets'.

4. To investigate how youth's identity impacts on 'street' and architectural design.
5. To use this background research on youth's identity in designing a proposed youth orientated lifestyle centre.

### **1.3. SETTING OUT THE SCOPE:**

#### **1.3.1. DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM:**

This study looks specifically at youth's search for identity through their activities and presence in the 'streets'. The focus is on the youth and how they perceive and understand the value of the 'streets'. The study does not look into what the 'streets' represent for the adult community or their perspective on the activities and presence of the youth in these spaces, apart from how it impacts the youth.

Secondly the research looks at the 'streets' as a space for the youth which exists outside the boundaries of home and school, where they can find and express their own identity. It is understood that a youth's home and school can, and does, have an impact on moulding part of their identity but this study will not address that aspect of their identity as it would not be relevant to the study.

Thirdly this research is also looking into a specific period of a youth's life, namely the transitional phase between childhood and adulthood where their search for identity, among their peers and within society, is most noticeable in the 'streets'. This would limit the research to youth within the ages of about 13-19 (teenagers).

Finally this research is conducted within the context of the town of Kokstad. The town has some unique characteristics that have impacted the nature and use of the environment and where the youth choose to spend their free time. Although Youth identity is not uncommon in other cities it may differ in form depending on the context and for this reason the study will be specifically aimed at the youth's search for identity within the context of Kokstad.

### 1.3.2. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS:

#### Youth –

For the purpose of this study the term youth is used to refer to teenagers, adolescents or young people who are currently in the main transitional phase of their life between the ages of 13 to 19.

#### ‘Streets’ –

‘Streets’ in this study is used as a metaphor to refer to the essence of a street as an outdoor or public space where people (or youth as in this case) can be found; a space that allows people to connect and hang-out with others.

#### Ego Identity –

Ego identity is a term coined by Eric Erikson (1968) referring to a person’s own identity, their personality, basically what identifies or makes them who they are.

#### Psychosocial Development –

Psychosocial development is defined as the combination of the psychological (intellectual) needs or desires of an individual and the social needs and desires which ultimately lead to an individual’s growth specifically in the area of identity.

#### Identity Crisis –

Erik Erikson (1968) used this term to refer to a crossroad in an individual’s life where they are forced to make a choice that will ultimately allow them to determine who they will become.

#### Risk Behaviours –

Risk behaviours are essentially activities that would be deemed bad or harmful to an individual. These could also include activities that may be against the law.

#### Adult Gaze –

This term is used specifically in regard to the youth referring to the idea of one being within the field of vision of an adult; their presence is being observed or monitored by an adult, someone with authority.

Chill –

Chill is an informal (slang) term used by the youth to refer to the process of relaxation or hanging out with their friends.

Hangout –

The term hangout is understood to represent a place where youth enjoy spending time with one another.

Place-making –

Place-making, as its name suggests, is the method of crafting spaces into quality places that have meaning and that people want to spend time in and use.

Flaneur –

A flaneur is a term derived from the French language which is used to refer to a stroller or a window shopper, a person who lounges around casually.

### 1.3.3. STATING THE ASSUMPTIONS:

The first assumption is that there is a fairly large population of youth, specifically in Kokstad, hanging-out in the 'streets'. The reality is that this search for identity in the 'streets' may not be the case with every single youth in Kokstad but the youth's presence in the 'streets' of Kokstad is definitely a visible component of the urban fabric. There is, therefore, enough grounds to suggest that this study is relevant, not for the entire population, but for a fairly large population of youth in Kokstad.

The second assumption is that the youth's presence and activities in the 'streets' can, and do, have a connection to their search for identity. Through a comprehensive exploration of previous literature regarding this particular topic, several behavioural patterns have been associated to a youth's search for identity in the 'streets'. Some of these same characteristics can be observed in the context of Kokstad.

Another assumption is that youth identity is something that will continue to be explored and contested in the public or semi-public realm. Youth at some point in their life transition from childhood to adulthood and during this time there is a desire, among the large majority of

youth, to find their own identity and place in society and among their peers (see for instance Malone, 2002 and Hall, Coffey, Williamson, 1999). Youth identity is constantly changing and being contested but this search, for the majority of the youth, continues to take place in the public or semi-public realm. This is because it exists outside the boundaries of their home and school which limits their own expression to the expectations of their parents and teachers.

Lastly it is also assumed that youth are actually looking for a place where they can call their own and that this can be a place for them to search for their own identity within society and among their peers. Articles such as '*The Unacceptable Flaneur: The Shopping Mall as a Teenage Hangout*' (Matthews, Taylor, et al 2000) highlight youth's presence in the 'streets' as a connection to their search for identity, resulting from having no other places to go. This research intends to bridge the gap by informing an architectural solution that provides the youth with an environment that is conducive to their needs and desires.

#### 1.3.4. KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What is youth's identity?
2. What is the relationship between youth's identity and the 'streets' as a place of expression?
3. What does youth's presence and activities in the 'streets' say about their needs and desires in these spaces?
4. How can youth's identity influence the design of 'streets' and the associated architecture?
5. How can this research be interpreted in designing a proposed youth orientated lifestyle centre?

### 1.4. RESEARCH METHODS AND MATERIALS:

#### 1.4.1. RESEARCH METHODS

**EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE STUDY:** This research will be approached through an exploratory qualitative study because the aim is to investigate youth identity as the phenomenon which exists in the natural environment, the 'streets' of Kokstad. The focus of the study will be around investigating the presence and activities of the youth on the 'streets'



to understand what these spaces represent to the youth and the characteristics that draw them here. This approach is further necessary because the desired outcome of this study is to understand and explore the youth's search for identity in the 'streets' and suggest possible solutions for the built environment to respond to youth identity in Kokstad.

**CONVENIENCE OR ACCIDENTAL SAMPLING METHOD:** Due to the nature of the research, a non-probability convenience (also known as accidental) sampling method will be used to provide the easiest access to the sample. The sample will be selected from access gained through a local church in town which runs a youth group, bringing youth from various backgrounds (between 13-19 years of age from around Kokstad) to a central location on a regular basis. This will allow the researcher to connect with the youth and conduct interviews with specific youth that will contribute to the study depending on their availability and the approval of their parents. Permission from the pastor of the church will be obtained for this study. This will also allow the researcher to follow up with the sample if additional information is required at a later stage. Care will be taken to make sure that an unbiased response, by virtue of the church as a central location and point of access, is avoided. The sample size is estimated to be about 10-15, depending on the point of saturation, which will be decided when there is enough information gathered to understand youth's search for identity and how that can contribute to the built form.

#### 1.4.2. RESEARCH MATERIALS

**DATA COLLECTION – INTERVIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS:** Two different approaches will be taken to ensure the study will provide the necessary understandings of youth's search for identity in the 'streets' and the associated benefits and issues surrounding their presence and activities. An emic approach in the form of semi-structured interviews will initially be conducted with the youth to understand their needs and perspectives. Based on information gathered through the interviews with the youth an etic approach will then be taken in the form of observations, carried out in common hangout areas around town, to gain first-hand experience of their presence and activities.

**DEDUCTIVE CODING SYSTEM OF DATA ANALYSIS:** This research will employ a deductive coding system of data analysis because it involves firstly setting out a list of relevant themes around youth's search for identity. The information gathered through the interviews and observations will then be sorted and used to supplement and support the

arguments being made in each theme. This information will then be interpreted to inform an architectural response that permits and promotes youth identity in Kokstad.

### 1.5.3. VALIDITY, RELIABILITY AND RIGOUR

The intention of this study is to investigate and explore youth's search for identity, specifically in Kokstad, as a way to suggest how this phenomenon can contribute toward built form. It involves understanding and applying the concept of youth's identity to architecture, in a way that will create a platform to allow the architecture to respond to youth's identity. The purpose is to suggest a way for youth's identity to exist within the fabric of the Kokstad and at the same time promoting the youth's identity within society.

The validity of the research is seen in the research structure, in terms of the way in which the data is collected and analysed. Firstly it involves the research seeking to understand what youth's identity is all about and if or where this has been evident in other places, through the use of literature dealing with youth's identity in public spaces. The study will then examine the specific dynamics of the youth's search for identity in Kokstad through the use of interviews and observations of the youth who use the 'streets' as an avenue to develop their own identity. It is important to contextually explore youth's identity because every place is different; Kokstad is unique in that the youth have no other places to go.

The interviews are necessary to examine the youth's perspectives on their presence and activities in the 'streets' as this will provide insight into their behaviour and associated needs. Every effort has been made to structure the questions in a manner that will provide the most reliable information relevant to this study without pre-empting responses. The observations will provide an opportunity to gain first-hand experience to back up the findings of the interviews and highlight any other potentially important aspects that might not have been picked up by the youth.

Once all this information has been collected and analysed, it can be used to make contextually based suggestions for how youth's search for identity in the 'streets' can impact the built form by informing an architecture that responds to the youth's identity. This information will then be relevant to the context of Kokstad and inclusive of the youth's perceptions and ideals.

## **1.5. THEORIES AND CONCEPTS:**

### **Youth Identity –**

Youth identity refers to the specific process of development of identity that generally occurs during the adolescent stage. During this process the youth begin to define their own identity by continuously testing their own boundaries to figure out where they fit in society (Kroger, 2003, Marcia, 1980 and Mc Leod, 2008). Erik Erikson has probably been one of the earliest and most prolific authors on the subject of identity, noted predominantly for his breakdown of the psychosocial development of identity into eight distinctive stages (Mc Leod, 2008). James Marcia is another distinguished theorist on the subject of identity development, particularly in youth, and most noted for his work in developing the identity statuses (Marcia, 1980 and Kroger, 2003).

### **Sociology of Space –**

Space in itself has been a topic of great discussion and exploration among many well know theorists, such as Henry Lefebvre, Michel Foucault, Georg Simmel and Nigel Thrift, all of whom believed that space has more than just a physical presence. As much as it is about a physical representation, many of these authors identified the fact that there is a social component which defines the way in which space is both perceived and constructed (Urry, 2004). The sociology of space developed as a study of the importance of this social component to space, essentially seeking to understand the connections humans have to space through various interactions with it. The most important contributions to the sociological significance of space came from the classical sociologist, Georg Simmel (Fearon, 2004).

### **Streets as places –**

‘Streets as places’ is a newly observed phenomenon of a once thriving reality that existed as an integrated part of the city many years ago. The concept essentially hinges on the idea of place-making; looking at ways to reinvent street spaces so that they add value and meaning to the city. The conceptualization of ‘streets as places’ developed, and has been highlighted, as a necessary entity to re-establish the value of streets as more than just a conduit for cars (Secunda, Davies, Kent et al, 2008). According to Fred Kent of Project for Public Space, the phrase or concept itself originated about 15 years ago (Secunda, Davies, Kent et al, 2008) but

the idea dates back as far as the late 1950's with literature from the author and activist Jane Jacobs. This idea is also shared by authors such as Jan Gehl, Shirley Secunda and Gary Toth.

## **1.6. CONCLUSION:**

This research intends to highlight that the built environment, specifically in Kokstad, does not commonly or adequately attend to youth's identity. Through understanding and conceptualizing youth's search for identity in the 'streets', the study aims to express how youth's identity can contribute to architecture. Instead of separating out the literature and theories, the next two chapters will begin to build the structure of the argument through a combination of literature and application of theoretical ideas mentioned earlier. This allows the argument to flow better. Chapter 2 will highlight the social issue and chapter 3 will begin to express how architecture can become a key in the discussion. Chapter 4 will begin to draw principles from several architectural examples which will provide a base leading into the last chapters which look at a contextual application of the ideas presented in this research.





## **CHAPTER 2 | THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL NATURE OF YOUTH'S IDENTITY**

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION:**

Chapter two combines the theories of youth identity and sociology of space with several articles on youth's identity development. The purpose is to tackle the social and cultural nature of youth's identity; seeking to understand exactly what it is all about and why it is an important aspect of youth's development and society today. Chapter two is broken up into four main sub-headings namely:

- 2.2 Understanding the developmental process of youth's identity formation
- 2.3 Conveying the importance of youth identity
- 2.4 Youth's search for identity today
- 2.5 The effects of the social principles of space on youth's identity

## **2.2. UNDERSTANDING THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS OF YOUTH'S IDENTITY FORMATION:**

The idea of identity has been expressed and examined in many different ways, by many different theorists of the past few decades. Simply put it involves an idealistic perspective of one's characteristics that allow a person to recognize who they are and where they fit within society. Marcia (1980, p. 159) refers to this as a;

*"Self-structure – an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history."*

Youth's identity, as expressed earlier, builds off of this understanding referring specifically to the process of development where one's identity is both tested and established. This process occurs most predominately in the youth (adolescent or teenage) stage of life (Kroger, 2003, Marcia, 1980 and Mc Leod, 2008). Mc Leod (2008) refers to this period as a transition period where young people shift from childhood into adulthood. During this process they become more independent and thus begin to search for their own individuality, seeking to determine their sense of belonging and uniqueness (Kroger, 2003 and Marcia, 1980). The youth, in essence, begin to establish both social and cultural relationships and connections that significantly shape who they become later in their adult life. It is important to note, at this point, that identity is not necessarily static or concrete once fully developed, but rather fluid in that one's identity can constantly be re-examined and altered throughout one's lifetime (Marcia, 1980).

Erikson (1968) referred to the concept of ego identity in which he adopts a psychosocial method of understanding identity. Here he...

*"...emphasized the role of culture and society and the conflicts that can take place within the ego itself (Mc Leod, 2008, p. 1)".*

In Erikson's 8 stages of identity, he takes the assumption that an identity crisis occurs at each stage (Erikson, 1968). According to Mc Leod (2008) this crisis consists of an inner conflict between an individual's psychological needs (psycho) and the needs of society (social). This crisis acts as a critical turning point compelling an individual to respond in a certain way that ultimately determines the direction of their future (Kroger, 2003).

The eight stages that Erikson refers to are (McLeod, 2008, p. 2):

- The trust vs. mistrust stage (first year or so of life)
- Autonomy vs. shame and doubt stage (eighteen months to three years)
- Initiative vs. guilt (three to five years of age)
- Industry (competence) vs. inferiority (five to twelve years of age)
- Identity vs. role confusion (twelve to eighteen years of age)
- Intimacy vs. isolation (eighteen to forty years of age)
- Generativity vs. stagnation (forty to sixty-five years of age)
- Ego integrity vs. despair (age 65 and up)

Erikson, among several other thinkers, placed great emphasis on the fifth stage (identity vs. role confusion) specifically, because they believed that this period is where the most development of identity occurs (McLeod, 2008). Here is where one can begin to see the conceptualization of youth's identity coming through. Erikson believed that the quality of fidelity would be the surety of success in this specific developmental stage. McLeod (2008, p. 4) defines this as...

*"...being able to commit one's self to others on the basis of accepting others even when there may be ideological differences."*

James Marcia, in his development of the identity statuses, structured these around the theories defined years earlier by Erikson. He developed them as a means to methodologically determine the maturity level of an individual's identity, allowing his theories to be...

*"...subjected to empirical study" (Marcia, 1980, p. 161).*

The first status is that of the Identity-achieved individual. These youth are generally in the later stages of adolescence, or are already young adults, showing a strong maturity in their identity development. They have gone through a process of testing and exploring their identity, before choosing to commit to and pursue their own ideology (Marcia, 1980 and Kroger, 2003). The second stage Marcia (1980) refers to as foreclosure. These individuals show a commitment to a certain ideology but, unlike the first group, these have not been explored well, rather it has been chosen or imposed on them from a parent or guardian (Marcia, 1980 and Kroger, 2003). The third status is that of the Moratorium. These individuals are either struggling to find, or are still in the process of searching for their



meaning and purpose; they have not yet made any commitments to an ideological perspective (Marcia, 1980 and Kroger, 2003). The last group is referred to as the diffusion individuals. These youth seem to be indifferent to any ideology or direction in life and this is irrespective of whether or not they have been through a decision-making phase (Marcia, 1980 and Kroger, 2003).

Now that there is a clear understanding of youth's identity and its developmental process the next section begins to express the significance of youth identity, both for the youth and for the community in which they live.

### **2.3. CONVEYING THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH IDENTITY:**

One of the most basic and yet fundamental questions almost every human being, at some point in time and in some way, shape or form, has pondered on is this; Who am I? (McLeod, 2008). Such simplicity opens up a world of possibilities that one could spend a lifetime uncovering. During the early stages of life, however, many of these possibilities are ones which have been either offered or imposed on an individual based upon factors surrounding their upbringing.

A large percentage of one's early form of identity is shaped by adults closest to an individual (parents, guardians, teachers etc.) but there comes a point where it is necessary for an individual to begin to find his/her own feet. It is essential for the youth to firstly test what they have come to know about whom they are, through their upbringing, and secondly to explore who they can become (Hall et al, 1999).

*“Youth is, by definition and irrespective of any wider context of social change, a time when identities are understood to be generally fluid – a period of transition during which elements of an adult self and future are explored and settled on, one way or another. The teenage and early adult years are important...because it is here, at least in the first-world western cultures, where people are formed most self-consciously through their own...activities. It is where they form symbolic moulds through which they understand themselves and their possibilities for the rest of their lives (Willis, 1990, p. 7-8).”*

As the youth begin to leave behind their childhood they enter into a period of transition into the adult world. Here change is probably the most stable aspect of their life as they develop physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually (Biehler, 1978). It is during this time that the youth begin to understand and learn about themselves and where their place is in society (Malone, 2002 and Hall et al, 1999). Youth who have not been afforded the opportunity to, or choose rather not to, engage in an identity formation process, find themselves in what Erik Erikson would refer to as an identity crisis of role confusion (Mc Leod, 2008).

This issue of identity vs. role confusion (Mc Leod, 2008) and its connotations is better understood through Jane Kroger's commentary on the identity statuses highlighted by James Marcia (Kroger, 2003). Youth, who have formed a strong sense of identity, tend to be far better off socially and emotionally than in comparison to the youth who have not developed their own sense of identity (Kroger, 2003). These youth generally tend to demonstrate an ability to connect and develop closer personal relationships with friends and family out of a genuine interest for others (Kroger, 2003). They display greater levels of motivation and self-confidence and have the capacity to perform better under stress, using a variety of different strategies that allow them to make more informed decisions (Kroger, 2003). These youth, overall, have a much better understanding of their individuality as well as their place in society which ensures a higher potential of successful integration into the adult world (Kroger, 2003).

Youth, who have not made any attempts to explore or commit to an identity, generally find themselves on the opposite side of the spectrum. These youth are generally characterised by their lack of self-confidence and high level of dependency upon others (Kroger, 2003). They often struggle to adjust to changing environments, as well as to develop deeper relationships with those around them, and they can also be highly susceptible to the negative aspects of peer-pressure (Kroger, 2003). These youth, overall, do not have a good understanding of their individuality and place in society which often leads to a rocky and potentially uncertain transition into an adult society (Kroger, 2003).

An article written by Tara Dumas, Wendy Ellis and David Wolfe (2012) entitled '*Identity development as a buffer of adolescent risk behaviours in the context of peer group pressure and control*' further highlights some of positive effects of identity commitment and exploration with regard to safeguarding the youth from risk behaviours as a result of peer pressure. Although some teens are generally more susceptible to peer-pressure, the study they

conducted clearly shows that youth who display a higher level of identity development are less likely to get involved in deviant behaviour and substance abuse than in comparison to youth with low identity development (Dumas, Ellis, and Wolfe, 2012).

*"During the identity-exploration process, teens are exposed to and reflect on a variety of differing personal beliefs, values and goals from which to construct their own personal identities; this process may encourage high identity-exploration teens to rely less on one external source of information or influence (e.g., the peer group) when making personal decisions, for example, about engagement in risk behaviours (Dumas et al, 2012, p.924)."*

Youth Identity or, more specifically, the identity formation process which occurs primarily in the adolescent youth stage of life is crucial to the successful development of the youth as they transition into adulthood. A society that concerns itself with the future and investing in the lives of young people who will become the leaders of tomorrow ought to be concerned, not just with a proper education for these youth, but also with their identity.

Providing opportunities for the youth to test and define themselves, their own identity, will give them a solid base upon which they have the choice to become whoever they want to be (Hall et al, 1999). As an added advantage, this process will also reduce the likelihood of the youth involving themselves in potentially risqué behaviour (Dumas et al, 2012) and can contribute significantly to the social capital of cities and towns (Malone, 2002). In order to understand how to do this, or at least where to start, one has to understand what youth's identity looks like today.

## **2.4. YOUTH'S SEARCH FOR IDENTITY TODAY:**

According to an article published by Wouter Vanderstede (2011), entitled '*chilling*' and '*hopping*' in the '*teenage space network*', studies undertaken during the period of the late 1970's to the mid 1990's highlighted a growing concern for the lack of inclusion of youth in urban planning; this in response to the youth becoming more apparent in the public realm, which was often seen in a negative light as the youth were not considered legitimate users of public space (Malone, 2002). More recent studies, however, painted a very different picture

as the presence and activities of youth in public space became, and are continuing to become, increasingly more evident and contested.

Youth's search for identity as they transition into adulthood is very different today than it was for prior generations (Hall et al, 1999). The context and the process of their search are constantly changing as society continues to develop and advance and as hall et al (1999, p. 502) describes youth transitions are becoming...

*"...increasingly young people's to decide upon."*

This freedom continues to place the youth on the frontline as their desire for space and recognition is often met with conflict. Matthews et al (2000), in their article titled *The unacceptable flaneur*, describes the idea of a cultural boundary zone where youth and adults each have their own place but, with the increasing presence of youth in public space, this boundary is constantly being tested by the youth as they continue to redefine their own place in society.

*"By not giving way, young people carve out a cultural space that both redefines their position within society and continues to reposition the boundaries between adults and children (Matthews et al, 2000, p. 291)."*

Youth are frequently looking for a place to go, a place that exists outside of the boundaries of home and school where they can meet and spend time with others of like mind. This space is one that affords young people the opportunity to...

*"...enter on their own terms and on their own initiative, unaccompanied and unsupervised by adults (Hall et al, 1999, p. 506)..."*

...and it is important for them to continue seeking such spaces as it is here where they are able to construct their own identity (Malone, 2002). Lieberg (1995), in his article "*Teenagers and Public Space*", describes two common types of places that youth look for; places of retreat and places of interaction. Places of retreat are secluded spaces that are outside of the adult gaze allowing youth to unwind or withdraw from society either on their own or in small groups (Matthews et al, 2000). Places of interaction are almost the opposite in nature where...

*“...young people are on display and out and about to see others and be seen by others (Matthews et al, 2000, p. 285).”*

These are the important spaces when it comes to youth identity, the spaces that provide youth with a platform to test and define their own identity.

When it comes to places of interaction two key areas stand out above the rest in today's context. Jeremy Northcote (2006) talks about Nightclubbing as a popular leisure activity among older youth today, arguing that its popularity draws on more than just its perceived function. So much as it is a place for young people to listen to music, dance and 'chill' or have fun, the nightclub, furthermore, acts as a rite of passage for the youth as well as a space where they can be whoever they desire to be in the search for their own identity (Northcote, 2006).

The second area, as Kathryn Anthony (1985) describes in the title of her article, is the shopping mall. In much the same way as the nightclub's popularity among older youth comes from more than just its intended function, the younger youth use shopping mall as a place to meet and socialize with others, a place where they can construct their own identity (Matthews et al, 2000). Wouter Vanderstede (2011) referred to the mall as the hybrid space because of its ideal nature as a semi-public space, allowing the youth to appropriate the space within the safety of adult supervision.

The sociology of space as a theoretical idea has the potential to add some unique insights into the importance of the social element of space, which will help to further understand the youth's connections to specific spaces. This will be discussed in the subsequent section with the aim of providing a platform to lead into the 'streets' as an all-encompassing expression of youth spaces.

## **2.5. THE EFFECTS OF THE SOCIAL PRINCIPLES OF SPACE ON YOUTH'S IDENTITY:**

As previously mentioned, George Simmel, among several other authors, expressed an understanding that space has more than a physical presence. Space is perceived and constructed through the social connections and interaction people have with that space (Urry,

2004). This is of particular importance when one looks into youth identity and the role or effect of space on this process.

Firstly one has to understand the principles. George Simmel is one of the key authors on the subject of sociology and space and his writings on the principles of space form the basis of this theory. In his spatial analysis, Simmel identified five key principles, found in the social interactions of people and place (Urry, 2004), that essentially make up and define the quality of a space (Simmel, 1997).

The first principle is the ‘exclusive nature of space’, which refers to the uniqueness that each space has (Urry, 2004). This means that by purely by defining a space it creates a set of social interactions that are permanently linked to that space and therefore sets the space apart from any other (Simmel, 1997). These interactions can either be between the people occupying the space or between the people and the space (Fearon, 2004). This uniqueness is important to the youth who are in constant search of a space that has the unique set of values they desire; understanding what it is they are looking for in a space is imperative to ensure their needs and desires are reflected.

The second principle Simmel emphasized stated that;

*“...space may be subdivided, for social purposes, and framed in boundaries (Fearon, 2004, p. 1).”*

These social boundaries, although not necessarily physical, allow the social group that occupies the space to create its own set of rules, reinforcing their own sense of authority in the space and adding a degree of comfort for those in the group (Simmel, 1997). Youth rely on the construction of their own boundaries because it allows them to culturally test and redefine their position in society (Matthews et al, 2000).

The third quality refers to the ability to affect social formations through the localization of social interactions in a space (Simmel, 1997). Essentially by defining a point in space that has a certain set of social values attributed to it one can influence the social interactions in and around it by attracting or...

*“...bringing together otherwise independent elements (Fearon, 2004, p. 2).”*

For the youth this can be expressed as a gathering point, a place to hang out, with the potential to draw youth from various backgrounds to a common space, for a common purpose, and allowing them the opportunity to interact. The youth need these places of interaction because of their desire to figure out who they are and where they fit in (Hall et al, 1999).

The fourth point Simmel made in reference to space and sociology is the proximity between individuals and groups (Fearon, 2004). Here it was his understanding and belief that our sensory perceptions (sight, smell, and touch primarily) play an important role in determining the social interactions between individual and groups which then has an effect on the social structure of the space (Simmel, 1997). These determining factors also, then, ultimately play a role in defining the interactions between the youth themselves and the spaces they occupy and consequently influence their identity development.

The last principle talks about the possibility of changing locations (Urry, 2004). As people move from place to place (most predominantly in groups, as with the nomadic tribes) the social interactions already previously formed are affected by the change in space and with that the space they left behind is affected as well by their absence. It becomes difficult to track the effects of this principle on youth's identity development but when big changes such as this are made, there are aftereffects which impact both the youth who remain and those who leave.

In essence these principles explore the social constituent to space, of which youth identity develops out of. The youth are looking for a space, not just any space, and the specifics of those spaces can be determined and affected through the social structures which exist within that space (Simmel, 1997). This will be important to remember going forward into chapter 3 as one begins to see the link forming between the role of space and architecture in the developmental process of youth's identity formation.

## **2.6. CONCLUSION:**

Through the theories and literature examined in this chapter, one can begin to see and comprehend the nature of youth's identity, both in terms of its social and cultural value, and its significance to the youth and society as a whole. Youth's identity development is an

important process, one which can be determined and affected by the spaces where the youth attempt to test and define it. It is important, at this point, to note that popular youth hangout spaces that differ from city to city. Matthews et al (2000) argues that all of these spaces, where the youth can be found gathering outside of their home or school, can be represented under one banner using the term 'streets'.







## **CHAPTER 3 | DEFINING THE ‘STREETS’ AND ITS CONNECTION TO ARCHITECTURE**

### **3.1. INTRODUCTION:**

Chapter three explores the aspects of space, looking at the place-making principles of streets as places, and taking this idea further into the conceptualization of the ‘streets’ to establish how this is relevant to the youth and their identity. The purpose of this is to define and explore the connection between architecture and the ‘streets,’ providing a base on which to suggest how youth identity can contribute to architectural design. Chapter 3 is split into three main sub-headings namely:

- 3.2 Identifying the place-making principles of the streets
- 3.3 Conceptualizing the ‘streets’
- 3.4 Bridging architecture and the ‘streets’

### 3.2. IDENTIFYING THE PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES OF THE STREETS:

The ideals of place-making are fast becoming powerful tools in the debates around building better, more connected, caring communities. Although it may seem unlikely to some, the unclaimed nature of the streets allows them to become a central figure in these debates as to the possibilities of place-making in public space.

Streets once connected both places and people; they formed the heart of a city. Since this time a number of contributing factors have ultimately lead to the slow decline of these 'places' in the city. The streets are losing their value and people no longer feel comfortable to use these spaces longer than they need to (Jacobs 1961). It was for this reason that, in order to re-establish the value of streets as more than just a conduit for cars, several authors began looking into the place making principles of the streets; which led to the development of the concept of streets as places (Secunda, Davies, Kent et al 2008). Jane Jacobs, years earlier, (1961) argued this same notion in that she believed streets or sidewalks should be seen as public spaces in themselves, spaces that are designed for more than just allowing people to move from one point to another. They should be spaces that pedestrians feel safe and secure with strangers and spaces that add value and meaning to the city (Jacobs 1961). The streets have the potential to impact people and the city fabric around them and it is this power that makes streets so fundamental, so vital.

Gary Toth (2008 p. 74-75) highlights 10 key qualities that are essential to fostering streets as places that idealize the values of place-making. Some are more important than others, and some are extensions of another, but together they form a comprehensive checklist:

- The first involves *Attractions and Destinations*. Good streets have a variety of experiences that draw different people to them.
- The second is *Identity and Image*. A good image and identity is crucial to the success of a space as this makes people feel comfortable and more likely to return.
- The third is *Active Edge Uses*. This speaks of the architectural elements of the streets in that the buildings which define the space allow for a good interaction between the inside and outside activating the street edge.
- The fourth is *Amenities*. Facilities that support a wide variety of activities and maintain the friendly appeal of the place.

- The fifth is *Management*. This involves keeping the space safe and clean, as well as the supervision of events and tenants that promote the uniqueness of the street.
- The sixth element is that of *Seasonal Strategies*. Utilizing certain spaces throughout the year to encourage activity and offer a unique experience.
- The seventh is a *Diverse User Group*. It is essential to appeal to individuals from various races, gender, age and income levels so that everyone feels welcome in the space.
- The eighth is *Traffic, Transit and the pedestrian*. Sharing street space equally, providing easy access and connections to support various modes of movement.
- The ninth principle is the *Blending of Uses and Modes*. It's also important to ensure that various modes of transport and usage in terms of retail and commercial activities mix together well blurring the divide between public and private space.
- The final quality is *Neighbourhood Preservation*. "Great streets support the context around them" (Toth, 2008).

The recent redevelopment of the riverbanks of the Seine River is an excellent example of the implementation of the idea of streets as places that Gary Toth referred to (see figure 3.1 and 3.2).



FIGURE 3.1: Pedestrianized street space – Les Berges p. n/a (Source: ARCHMAG.RU, 2013).



FIGURE 3.2: Restaurants/café along the Berges de Seine p. n/a (Source: Author, 2012).

In April of 2010 the mayor of Paris unveiled his plans for the redevelopment of the roads along the river banks. The 'Les Berges' plans involved 'reclaiming' the riverside by completely pedestrianizing the lower road on the left side of the river with the intention of creating an area for locals and visitors to enjoy (Parisinfo, 2010). It spans a length of approximately 2.3 kilometres, providing 4.5 hectares of free recreational space including;

exhibition spaces, sporting facilities, leisure activities and amenities (for both young and old), floating gardens and several restaurants/café (Parisinfo, 2010).

The map below (figure 3.3), highlights the ‘Les Berges’ street space which, at an urban scale, connects a number of existing tourist attractions, anchored by the Eiffel Tower on one end and the Musée D’Orsay on the other. These elements are important because they give the

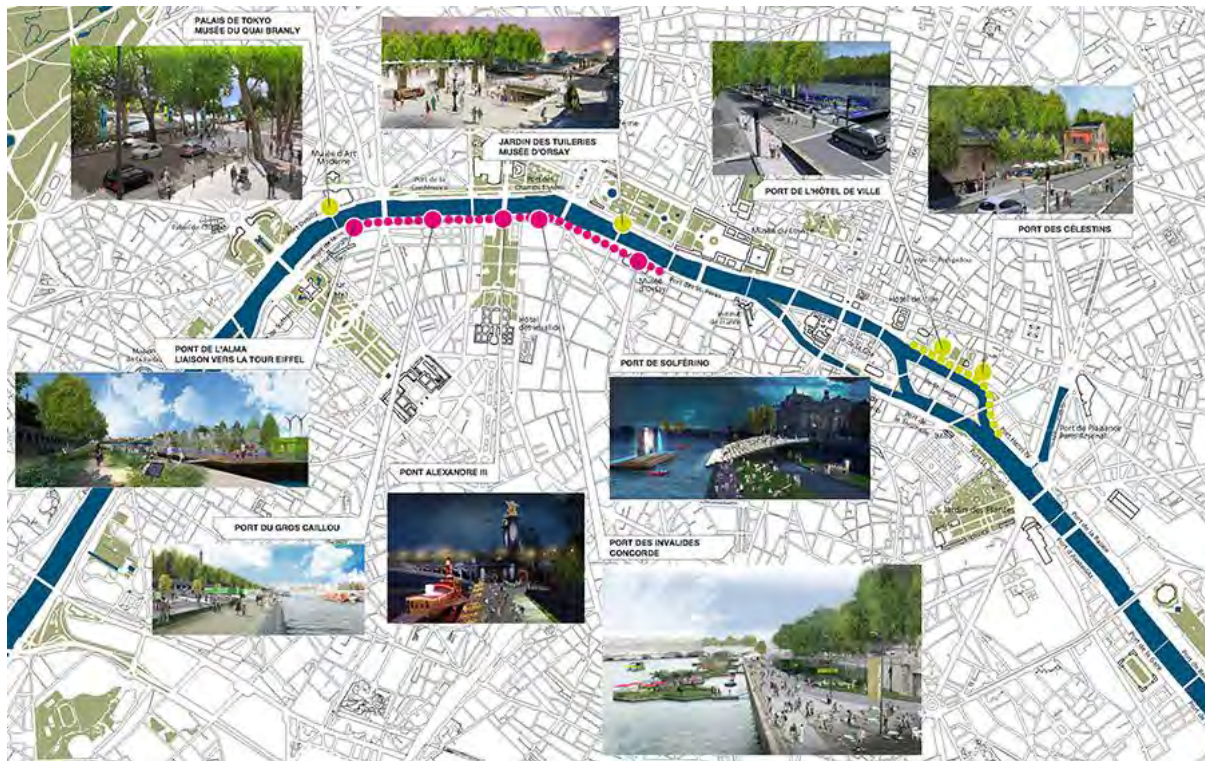


FIGURE 3.3: plan of ‘Les Berges’ showing main destination points p. n/a (Source: APUR, 2010).

space connecting them, the ‘street’, a purpose.

At a smaller scale, a number of activity spaces, relaxation gardens and restaurant/café provide an additional layer of destination points along the route to cater for the local community and the tourists as well. All of these spaces, of which not all are necessarily unique to Paris, combine together to create their own unique image, ‘Les Berges’. A multi-disciplinary team of people are responsible to facilitate and coordinate this regeneration project and the range of activities which occur throughout the year (Les Berges, n.d.), without this support the space will begin to lose its appeal. Lastly the unique layout of the existing structure allowed the development to separate out the different elements of the street in that the pedestrianized strip, which is also used by cyclists through a shared bike system, runs

alongside the river bank whilst connections between the road above and river occur at relatively short and regular intervals.

Great streets that embody the principles of placemaking can become community building spaces; spaces that personify the cultural richness of a community (Gary Toth, 2008). For this reason, the characteristics of the concept of streets as places provide a unique platform on which to broaden, or rather reimagine, the symbolic nature of the streets. This is of particular importance to the youth and the reason why will be expressed in detail in the next sub-section (Matthews, et al, 2000). The points raised here, all together, play a key role towards informing a successful approach to the design of streets as places and it is these principles that architecture can learn from and build off.

### **3.3. CONCEPTUALIZING THE ‘STREETS’:**

As previously mentioned the idea of the ‘streets’, used in this study, is a metaphoric representation of the nature of a physical city street, ones that characterized the cultural essence of the communities to which they belonged many years ago. It can be used as a description of any outdoor or public space where people (or youth as in this case) can be found; a space that allows people to connect and hang-out with others (Matthews, et al, 2000).

To the youth, however, the value of these spaces is deeper than that. To them the ‘streets’ embody the idea of the third space (Anthony, 1985) or as Matthews, et al (2000) describes as the interstitial space, a terrain between childhood and adulthood where the youth continue to test and construct their own social and cultural identity outside of the boundaries of their home and school. The ‘streets’ are a neutral testing ground where the youth have the freedom to express themselves without close parental control (Malone, 2002). The sketch below (figure 3.4) articulates this idea very simply by showing the difference between the home or school environment and the ‘streets’. In the home or school environment, the boundaries set up, have been defined and imposed by their parents or teachers. The ‘streets’, however, act as a third space where the youth have the freedom to define their own boundaries without close parental supervision.



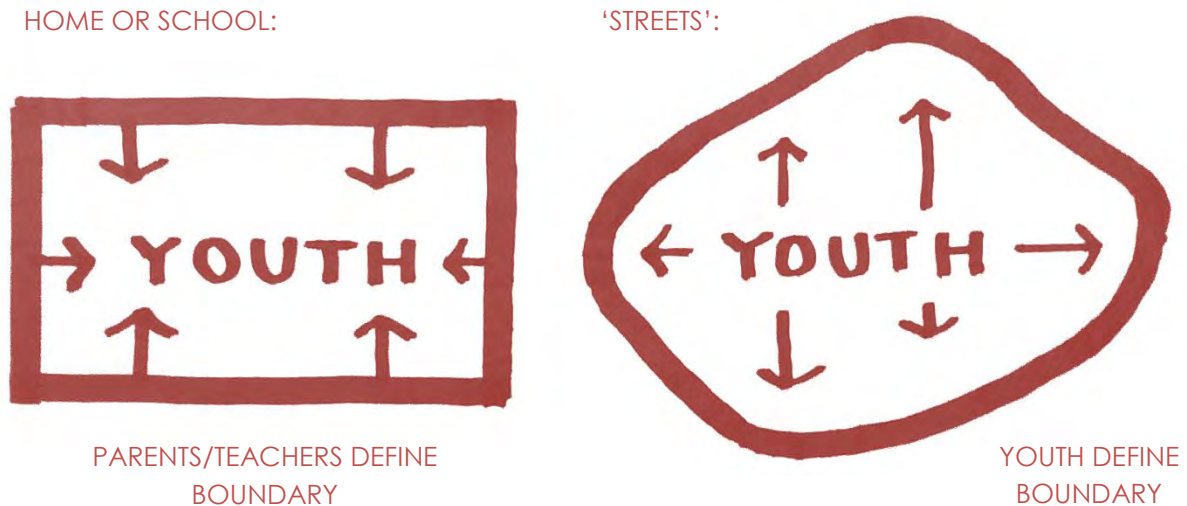


Figure 3.4: Sketch showing youth's boundaries p. n/a (Source: Author, 2015)

In Kathryn Antony's article titled *'The Shopping Mall: A Teenage Hangout'* (1985) she expresses the value of such third spaces to the youth who use it by using a quote from Oldenburg and Brissett (1980, p. 82) which reads;

*"At its best, a third place provides democratic friendship; a sense of belonging while yet retaining a distinctive personal identity; an opportunity for spontaneity, surprise, and emotional expression; a chance to stand aside from oneself and gain perspective on private idiosyncrasies."*

It is these qualities that make the 'streets' so unique and fascinating and that which continues to draw the youth to them. This is, fundamentally, precisely what the authors such as Jan Gehl, Shirley Secunda and Gary Toth talk about in reference to streets as places; places that add value and meaning to the city. Karen Malone (2002) firmly believed that the youth, in their use of the 'streets' as a place to express their divergent cultural values, understandings and needs, should be supported and valued as...

*"...significant contributors to the social capital of cities and towns (Malone, 2002, p. 157)."*

The presence of the youth in these spaces, however, is not without its conflict. In *'the Unacceptable Flaneur'* (Matthews et al, 2000) teenagers are defined as unacceptable flaneurs (strollers or window shoppers) within the shopping mall context because of the perceived nature of the space as an extension of the public realm of consumerist minded adults. The

youth, who generally do not adhere to their perspectives on the manner of use, often find themselves in conflict with the adults who attempt to regulate these spaces. In spite of this, the youth continue to remain present and active in these spaces often out of a lack of other places to go. (Matthews et al, 2000).

The solution to the problem seems to be pretty simple; give the youth a space for them to call their own. On the surface this often seems like the best solution but, as Malone (2002) explains in the provision of youth-specific spaces (the not seen and not heard approach), these tend not to be very successful. The youth are not necessarily looking for a place of their own but rather a place connected to the community, a place where they can feel part of the bigger picture.

*“What the “not seen and not heard” strategy fails to address is the attractiveness of shared community space for young people, who do not want to be excluded or be invisible in the everyday life of their cities (Malone, 2002, p. 165).”*

Malone (2002) adds an interesting perspective in that she argues that these conflicts can actually be seen as a positive facet of the ‘street’ environment because it is during these engagements that the youth learn conflict management and behavioural skills that will continue to benefit them throughout their adult life. In addition to this, the youth who stubbornly continue to hang out in these spaces both test and redefine the borders of youth identity within their own cultural and geological context, allowing them to engage in the social and cultural capital of their communities (Malone, 2002 and Matthews et al, 2000).

The ‘streets’ represent a space, a lived space, where people, adults and youth alike, connect and interact with other people (Matthews et al, 2000). These people are the community, a collection of individuals who are like-minded as well as some who are different but they all gather together in one space. This space (the ‘streets’) has the potential, through the social connections and interactions of its everyday users, to add an incredible amount of cultural value.



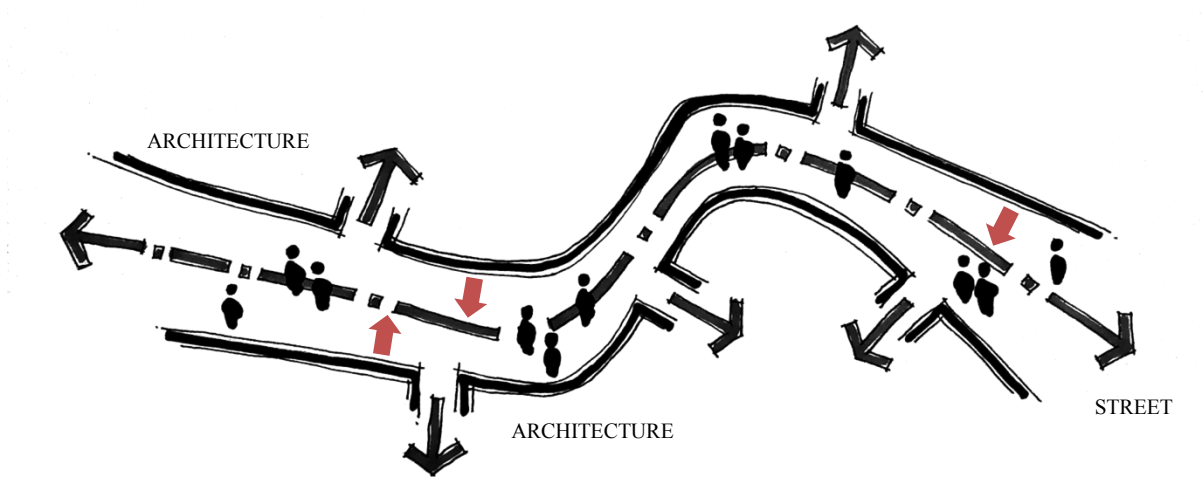


Figure 3.5: Interchange between architecture, the streets and the people who live, work or pass through these spaces p. n/a (Source: Author, 2015)



Figure 3.6: Artist render of a streetscape p. n/a (Source: Morris, 2009)

In as much as the architecture of cities and towns plays a vital role in shaping the street environments, the streets themselves also play a role in shaping and defining the urban context and thus the architecture which forms part of this network. The ability of architecture to relate directly with the street, and the street users, has a tremendous impact on the effectiveness of the street itself. In the same way the street environment has the potential to impact the architecture in that buildings need not be internally orientated, if the street environment is a healthy one.

This two-way interchange (view figure 3.5 and 3.6 above) affects both the physical form of the streets and architecture. Each element plays a key role in the bigger scheme of promoting a successful, sustainable neighbourhood community. It also goes deeper in that a successful

integration of both these elements affects the social connections between individuals (the community who live, work or pass through these spaces) who interact in the neutral zones between the architecture; the ‘streets’. The next sub-section begins to explore this notion further.

### 3.4. BRIDGING ARCHITECTURE AND THE ‘STREETS’:

One of the most famous quotes from, architect and theorist, Phillip Johnson (Lamster, 2012, p. 5) explains, quite well, the purpose of architecture and hence the role of architects by stating that;

*“All architecture is shelter, all great architecture is the design of space that contains cuddles, exalts, or stimulates the persons in that space.”*

In essence, architecture and space are connected. Simmel (1997) refers to one of the qualities of space as the idea that space can be framed. Architecture acts as a frame; a physical boundary which defines a space and has the potential, therefore, to affect the way a space is used and the people who use the space (Simmel, 1997). George Moore (1979) also explains this (view figure 3.7 below) by showing simply how the physical environment is one of several influencing factors on human behaviour, which refers to how people interact with a space and others in a space.

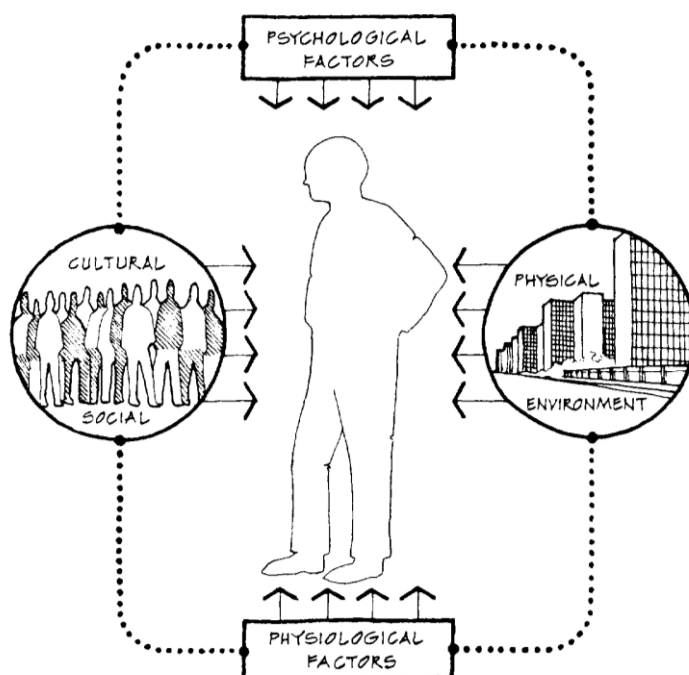


FIGURE 3.7: Factors influencing human behaviour p. 20 (Source: Moore, 1979).

If one understands that architecture, and the built environment in general, is a moderating factor of human interaction, then it is reasonable to assume that one has the potential to create a space, through an understanding of the sociological spatial principles as expressed by Simmel (1997), that achieves Philip Johnson's ideology of great architecture, a space that "touches" its users (Lamster, 2012).

The problem, as earlier described, is that, although these are simple spatial concepts to understand, the current state of the built environment does not adequately address this issue in reference to youth's identity. The built environment has the potential to directly invoke positive change on youth's identity development, because of its connection and control over the spaces which they occupy, however in many areas it fails to be very effective. In these areas the youth are forced to occupy spaces that were not intentionally designed for them because they really have no other places to go (Malone, 2002).

Practically it is difficult to implement strategies to address this issue without understanding the needs and desires of the user. The youth stage of life, however, is a very fluid period and the needs and desires of the youth tend to fluctuate based on a number of issues such as trends and behaviour patterns (Malone, 2002). Malone (2002) makes reference to an assessment made by Rob White which states;

*"It needs to be reinforced that creating positive public spaces for young people is a process. As such, it must be recognized that there is no single, or simple, solution to the issues...The process is ongoing, and requires long-term commitment of resources, staff and facilities (White, 1998, p. 146)."*

This is where the 'streets' becomes an important element in the discussion. The nature of the street life is mobile and fluid which means that it opens itself up to be constantly...

*"...reinvented in light of the production of street culture (Malone, 2002, p. 166)."*

The 'streets', therefore, have the potential to become the bridge connecting youth's identity and the built environment. If one were to understand and interpret the place value of the 'streets' then one could begin to use this as an architectural design tool. Figure 3.8 below explains how this, theoretically, would create a flow that allows architecture to build off the development of youth's identity through the 'streets' but at the same time impacting youth's identity in a positive manner. Due to its fluidity, youth's identity is difficult to accommodate

architecturally in a static well defined way, but, as youth's identity is tested and established in the realm of the 'streets', the 'streets' can become the element of youth's identity which has the capacity to impact architecture, provided the architectural response allows for the flexibility of the 'street' environment. If this were successful, then the architecture has the ability to impact youth's identity in a positive manner.

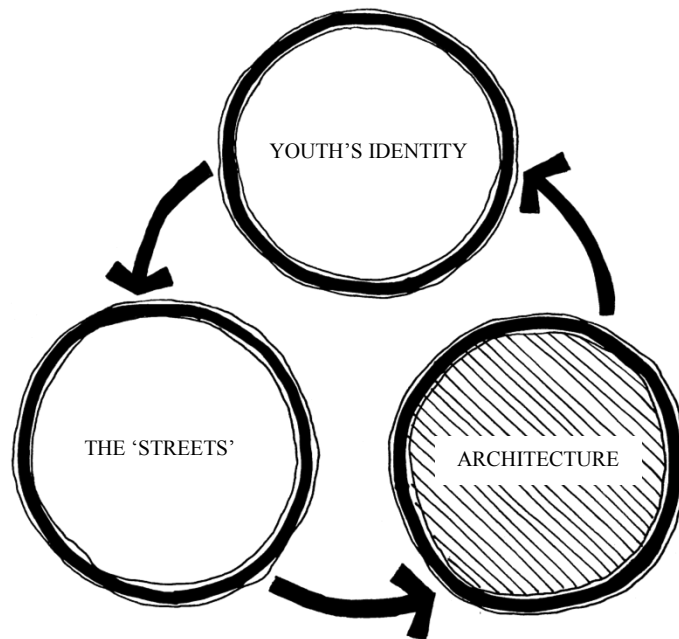


FIGURE 3.8: Creating a flow p. n/a (Source: Author, 2015)

Here we see how these three elements are interrelated. Together they provide a unique approach to the design and implementation of successful youth orientated space. This idea will be carried through more in depth later, but essentially this would offer an approach that both provides for and responds to youth's identity. It is imperative, also, to recognize that this approach must be case specific or at least contextual because youth's identity development and the nature of their use of the 'streets' differ from place to place.

### **3.5. THE SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF LIFESTYLE CENTRES TO BRIDGE ARCHITECTURE AND THE 'STREETS':**

A recent shift in mall design has been one of the clearest examples of the attempts to bridge architecture and the 'streets' that we can see today. Malls developed around the late 1950's as a way for developers and traders to control the surrounding environment and provide its

customers with a sheltered space that was more comfortable and safer than the city center and its streets.

Lifestyle centres (also referred to as theme park streets) are the modern trend in mall design (Kern, 2008). They are, in principle, malls but instead of an enclosed central atrium they have open air streets, complete with sidewalks, street furniture, street parking and cross-walks. They are designed to give its users the impression of walking along an actual urban street but in the safety and comfort of a mall, providing its shoppers with an outdoor shopping experience designed to symbolically represent the 'Main street' in town. Kern defines it as...

*"...a 'Disneyfied' shopping environment 'imagineered' to evoke the feeling of a real-life urban street" (Kern, 2008, p. 106).*

Streets as places identified the streets as once being the social center of the city and the heart of the community, but with crime and cars overtaking the roadways, people no longer feel safe and comfortable on the streets. Communities are, as a result, growing increasingly reclusive in an attempt to escape their environment out of fear and self-preservation. The reality is, however, that communities still desire these spaces being, by nature, social creatures. Generally people want to form part of something bigger, to have places where they can engage and interact and this is where developers used Malls, more specifically Lifestyle centres, to capitalize on the need and desire for public space (Kern, 2008).

Life style centres work hard to recreate a sense of place that has gone missing along many of the city streets in an environment that is safe for its users. Kern relates them to the idea of heterotopic space which is a real interpretation of a utopian or ideal space (Kern, 2008). They embody the ideals of streets as places in some rather controversial, unique and interesting ways.

The Ballito Lifestyle Centre is one such example of this shift which will provide a platform to critically analyse the successes and failures of these centres in bridging architecture and the 'streets'. The Ballito Lifestyle Centre is situated on the periphery of Ballito, a fast developing urban metropolis which began as a small holiday town located 40kms north of Durban. The centre was officially opened in 2003 with a few later additions in 2007. The centre has two main sections which each share a different take on the traditional form of a Lifestyle center or theme park street.



Figure 3.9: First section of the Ballito Lifestyle Centre p. n/a (Source: Helicam productions, n.d.)

In the first section (view figure 3.9 above) the center has a perimeter layout whereby the shops and walkway (the sidewalk) flank the large central parking courtyard. The street, where the cars move about, relates directly with the shops in the same way as a typical urban city street would. Planting greens the spaces and serves as a buffer zone between the road and walkway linking back to the idea of safety for pedestrians that is necessary for quality streets as places as well as linking to the design considerations for theme park streets. Amenities such as shading, lighting and bins are present and the spaces are well kept with cleaners walking around frequently.

The second section (view figure 9 below) is a more pedestrianized zone with a central pedestrian street that wraps around with shops opening out into the street on both sides. The environment, in this section of the mall, is very different to that of the first section. Planting no longer serves a protective function but rather an ecological decorative role. The building facades are varied, as a common thread throughout the center, but in this case the shops have both a strong visual and physical connection blurring the lines between what's inside and outside in a way that is very successful and attractive. This is the kind of street environment Jan Gehl refers to when talking about the relationship of the streets and building (Gehl, 2006). A variety of amenities are provided here unlike the first section and the success is seen in the way in which these spaces encourage shoppers to sit and to linger.





Figure 3.10: the pedestrianized 'street' at Ballito Lifestyle Centre p. n/a (Source: Forbes, n.d.)

Safety and comfort are probably the most important factors for lifestyle centres. As mentioned earlier safety plays a pivotal role in why malls developed in the first place and lifestyle centres developed as the alternative to the urban street environment. A lot of emphasis is placed on creating a clean and friendly atmosphere with private security always close at hand to monitor the premises and remove any unwanted characters (Kern, 2008). This can also be seen in the Ballito Lifestyle Centre with fencing around the premises and security guards always on hand. This drive, however admirable their initial intentions were for the safety of the users, has become one of the elements which destroy the democratic character of the 'streets' (Francis, 1987).

The desired nature of the 'streets', particularly for the youth, is one that allows the users to define their own boundaries (Matthews, et al, 2000). The 'streets' ought to provide a level of freedom for its users and this is even more important when one considers the youth who use the 'streets', not predominantly for consumerist purposes but, more often than not, as a third space to search for and establish their own sense of identity amongst their peers and within society (Anthony, 1985 and Malone, 2002). In order for the bridge between architecture and the 'streets' to be successful spaces for the youth they need to be democratic spaces where there is a good connection and flow between inside and outside; public and private.

### **3.6. CONCLUSION:**

Through the exploration of the fundamentals of youth's identity development and how this takes place in the 'streets', there is now a much clearer understanding of the potential of the 'streets' to play an important role in the connection of youth's identity and architecture. Youth's identity has the capacity to become a tool to impact architecture through the 'streets' and in the same breath architecture can then become a positive influencing factor of youth's identity. As articulated earlier, this approach provided have an element of fluidity, characterized by the 'streets', that allows it to continuously adapt to the fluctuating dynamics of the youth's search for identity.

Youth's search for identity is played out in the 'streets' because of the unique characteristics of these spaces. The 'streets', as a space, has the capacity to impact architecture for the very simple reason that architecture defines space. If one were to use the 'street' environment to provide a set of design parameters for architecture, architecture then has the potential to impact youth's identity.

One must however take into consideration the context in which architecture situates itself. The context must be carefully considered and reflected in the architecture because, as Malone (2002) highlighted, there is a difference in the nature and use of the streets, not just by the youth but also the community in general, when observing different cities. Although the 'streets' may be a universal reflection of an element of youth's search for identity, the context has the potential to affect the way the youth respond to elements of the 'street'. The context must, therefore, carefully be examined before any architectural solutions are set in place. Frampton believed that it was necessary, of architecture (or as he referred to "place-form" in critical regionalist architecture), to address the lack of identity and placelessness of regionalism, promoting a kind of cultural density necessary for cultivating a true public realm (Frampton, 1983).





# 4

## **CHAPTER 4 | EXPLORING CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO YOUTH'S IDENTITY, 'STREETS' AND ARCHITECTURE.**

### **4.1. INTRODUCTION:**

This chapter is an evaluation of three key precedents, namely the Daniels Spectrum Building, Game Streetmekka, and the Gary Comer Youth Centre, which were chosen as they each articulate elements of the social and architectural response that is beginning to take shape through the investigation of youth identity in the 'streets'. These characteristics will be used, alongside the suggestions already expressed in the previous chapters, to begin to develop concrete design rationales that effectively express the impact youth identity can have on architecture.

## 4.2. CULTIVATING DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY BUILDING SPACE: DANIELS SPECTRUM BUILDING IN TORONTO, CANADA

### 4.2.1. INTRODUCTION:



FIGURE 4.1: A photograph, taken on the corner, of the exterior of the Daniels Spectrum Building p. n/a (Source: Logan, n.d.).

Democratic community building spaces are vital to the youth's ability to understand their place within society and therefore important in defining their own cultural identity. The Daniels Spectrum building is a 5 500m<sup>2</sup> community based arts and cultural centre designed by Diamond Schmitt Architects (Daniels Spectrum, n.d.). It is located at 585 Dundas Street East in Toronto, Canada and developed as part of the greater revitalization of Regent Park, when the community expressed a desire for a dedicated cultural space in the area (Artscapediy, 2009). Since its opening in September 2012, the center has won numerous awards among also being named the best new venue for meetings and events in Canada by BizBash Magazine, in 2013 (Daniels Spectrum, n.d.). The building is open to everyone and aims to foster a creative environment focused on experience, learning and innovation (Artscapediy, 2009). It is owned by...

*"...the Regent Park Arts Non-Profit Development Corporation (RPAD), a non-profit joint venture between subsidiary corporations of Toronto Community Housing, The Daniels Corporation and Artscape (Daniels Spectrum, n.d.)."*

#### 4.2.2. KEY ELEMENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE:

Contextual:

The building is a direct response to the needs and desires of the community (Daniels Spectrum, n.d.). The elements within the building are specifically catered towards the community as the social heart of Regent Park,

*“A place where people come to be inspired, to learn, to share, to create (Artscapecity, 2009, p. 5).”*



Figure 4.2: Urban revitalization plan for Regent Park showing the location of the Daniel's Spectrum building p. n/a (Source: Torrance, n.d.)

The urban plan above (figure 4.2) shows the Daniels Spectrum building in relation to the larger urban revitalization plan for Regent Park. The Daniels Spectrum building is situated directly on the intersection of the main road axis (Dumas Street East) running through Regent

park, which gives it a lot of exposure to the larger community of the surrounding neighbourhoods, and the new Regent Park Boulevard, designed largely for pedestrian movement linking the Nelson Mandela Public School with the main Recreational park space. The main lounge space opens out into this street.

The combination of several founding organizations:

The building is home to seven anchor tenants who are collectively responsible for creating and maintaining the energy of the building. These tenants are all locally based non-profit organizations with similar visions to see the community and its members learn and grow (Artscapediy, 2009). These are; the ArtHeart Community Art Centre, Centre for Social Innovation Regent Park, COBA (Collective of Black Artists), Native Earth Performing Arts, Regent Park Film Festival, Regent Park School of Music and Pathways to Education (Daniels Spectrum, n.d.). The facility as a whole is managed by Artscape, a non-profit organization who co-own The Daniels Spectrum building along with the Toronto Community Housing and Daniels Spectrum Corporation. They are in charge of supervising the facility, responding to the needs of the people and developing the programme to keep the building active (Artscapediy, 2009). This idea of management links back to the principles Gary Toth highlighted in the development of successful ‘streets’ as places, as described earlier.

Integration of a variety of elements to bring people together:

Along with the several organizations that operate out of the Daniels Spectrum Building are a number of different facilities to cater to the diverse community, including the youth. This allows the centre to host events such as “dancing, art-making, singing, music playing, learning, socializing, community building, mentoring, collaborating and more in their event, performance and exhibition spaces (Daniels Spectrum, n.d.). The building is separated into 3 layers where the ground floor is the public face and is all about experience, housing the main auditorium hall, Artscape lounge and other exhibition spaces (Urbantoronto.ca, n.d.). The first floor is categorized as the learning layer, housing the office and studio spaces (Urbantoronto.ca, n.d.). The third floor is the innovation level which provides a base for young up and coming entrepreneurs to make an impact in their community (Urbantoronto.ca, n.d.).





Figure 4.3: Site and ground floor plan of the Daniel's Spectrum building p. n/a (Source: Archrecord, 2015.)

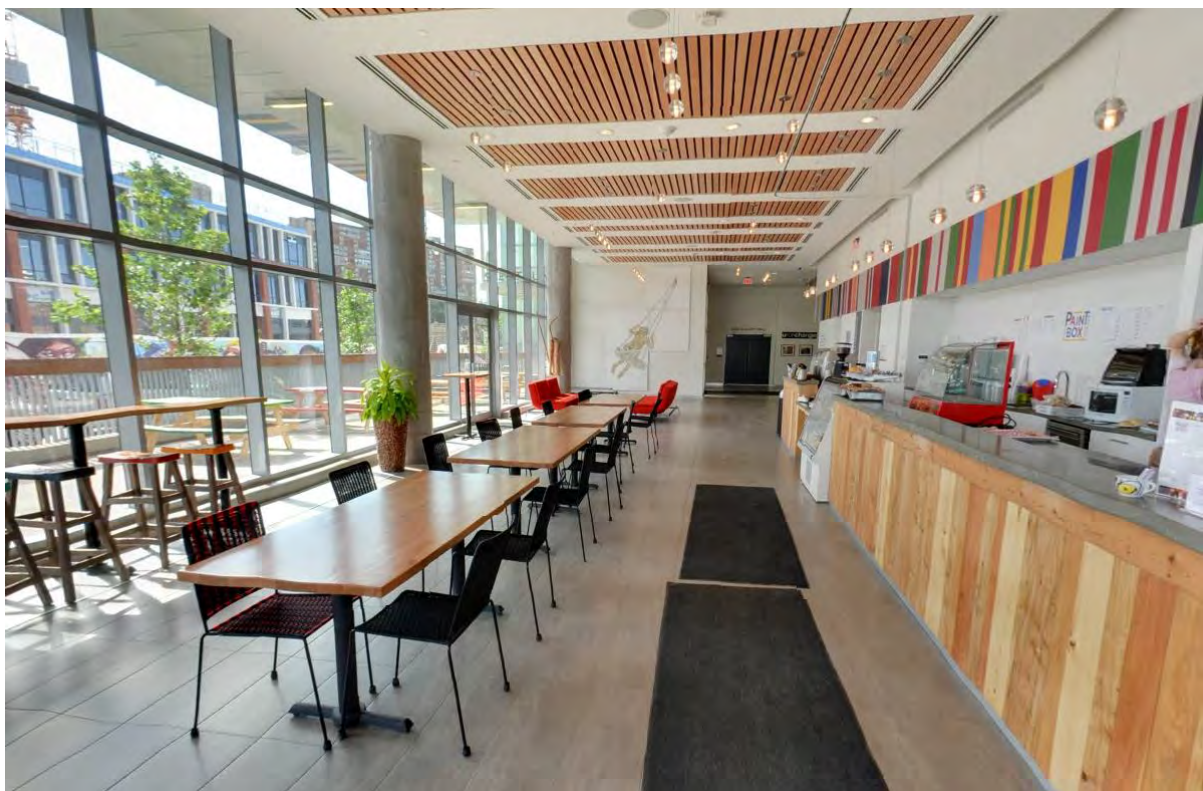


FIGURE 4.4: Photograph of the Artscape Lounge space in the building p. n/a (Source: Krivel, 2013)

Shared space – social lounge:

The Artscape Lounge (View figure 4.3 and 4.4 above) forms the entrance and heart of the Daniels Spectrum building. It serves, essentially, as a democratic ‘gathering place’, the town center; a social zone where anyone can come and meet with friends, organise their own informal meetings, read, do homework and whatever else they so desire (Daniels Spectrum, n.d.). The space has free Wi-Fi and is open and flexible to allow for a variety of uses and users (Daniels Spectrum, n.d.). The façade of this space is a full height glass façade which faces out into the ‘street’ to create a visual connection to the pedestrians along the boulevard and the people inside. This fosters a friendly and inviting atmosphere into the Daniels Spectrum building with the added benefit of this space being free and open to all.

#### 4.2.3 CONCLUSION AND RELEVANCE TO RESEARCH AND DESIGN:

According to Artscape them the Daniels spectrum building is...

*“...rooted in Regent Park, open to the world (Daniels Spectrum, n.d.).”*

Each year it hosts “tens of thousands of visitors and hundreds of arts and cultural events (Daniels Spectrum, n.d.).” The Daniels Spectrum building’s unique approach and community orientated focus makes it an ideal precedent for this research, especially the concept of the social lounge space. The social lounge space acts as a hangout space for the community embodying the principles of the ‘streets’, expressed earlier in this research, for the whole community (view figure 4.5 below).

## HANGOUT SPACE THAT PROMOTES DIVERSE SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY

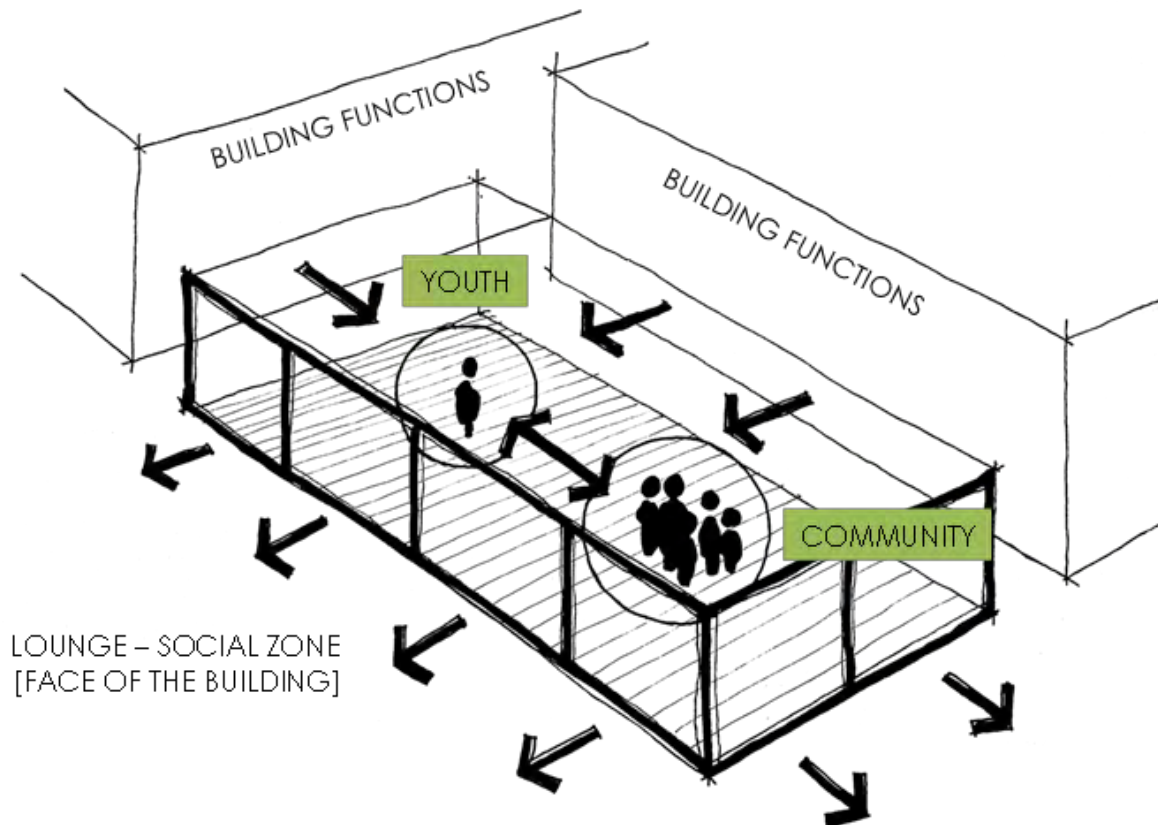


Figure 4.5: Sketch of design relevance of the Daniels Spectrum Building to the argument of this research p. n/a  
(Source: Author 2015)

The democratic nature of the space, not only acts as a community building beacon, but also provides the youth, who form part of the community, the ability to engage with society outside of their home and school environments, in an atmosphere that they feel comfortable in. This is one of the factors that make the 'streets' a space that has the potential to affect their identity development.



### 4.3. FOSTERING ‘STREET’ CULTURE IN ARCHITECTURE FOR THE YOUTH: GAME STREETMEKKA IN ESBJERG, DENMARK

#### 4.3.1. INTRODUCTION:

The Game Streetmekka, designed by the Copenhagen based architectural firm EFFEKT, was the winning entry in a competition to design a new sports facility on the site of a rundown Train Engine Roundhouse in Esbjerg, Denmark (EFFEKT, n.d.). The site held significant historical value as well as a new form of cultural value as it was identified that this space was taken over and being used by skaters and streets artists alike (Freason, 2014). This prompted the architects to design the new youth and community centre around this existing network through Europe’s fastest growing sport, Skateboarding (Freason, 2014). The building is set to be completed in December of 2015 (Stott, 2014) however workshops have already been hosted at the venue.



FIGURE 4.6: A rendered perspective of Game Streetmekka p. n/a (Source: EFFEKT, n.d.)

#### 4.3.2. KEY ELEMENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE:

Blending of indoor and outdoor sport spaces:

The Game Streetmekka is divided into several themed Mekkas, namely the Concrete Mekka, the Dance Mekka, the Lounge Mekka, the Asphalt Mekka, Brick Mekka and the Yellow Box,

each housing a different activity to cater for a variety of users (Freason, 2014). These spaces open out into the Street Mekka, with large wall panels that fold out or up, to allow the indoor and outdoor spaces to blend seamlessly allowing connections to occur between its diverse users (EFFEKT, n.d.). This is an important element in the design of ‘street’ spaces as these connections promote activity giving life to the ‘streets’.



FIGURE 4.7: A rendered perspective of the Asphalt Mekka in Game Streetmekka p. n/a (Source: EFFEKT, n.d.)

#### Promotion of the ‘street’ culture:

Realdania, a non-profit organization funding the project, had the vision to make use of deteriorating industrial sites, transforming them into year-round street culture hubs (Freason, 2014). The idea of a street culture hub here represents a collective of several informal activities which naturally play out in the street environments and have their own well defined cultural attachments, particularly those relative to this area of Denmark. By targeting this element it allows the building to feed of the cultural energy generated, from already existing systems, rather than trying to create a new kind of culture for the youth.

The building essentially feeds off the central street space which adopts a similar metaphoric nature of the ‘streets’ expressed earlier; taking the value of the streets and the activities which occur in these spaces and providing a more formalized platform for this activity to ensue. The street space here is expressed as an outdoor street sport arena and social space with a mini amphitheatre in the center (EFFEKT, n.d.). The open character of the spaces further integrates the unrestricted nature of the ‘streets’.



FIGURE 4.8: A photograph of some youth skating at Game Streetmekka during one of the workshops p. n/a (Source: GAME Streetmekka Esbjerg, 2015).

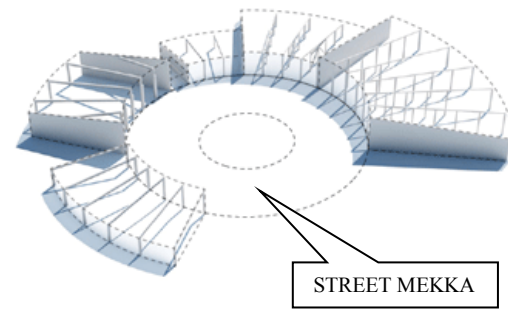


FIGURE 4.9: A conceptual layout of Game Streetmekka p. n/a (Source: EFFEKT, n.d.)

#### 4.3.3. CONCLUSION AND RELEVANCE TO RESEARCH AND DESIGN:

The building celebrates street culture and activity providing a unique and interesting space for the youth and community.

*“We propose to rebuild the site with new street sport facilities continuing the historical and pragmatic development of the roundhouse train depot. The distinct circular layout connects new and old and revitalizes the existing halls, turntable and tracks in a new hybrid of industrial architecture and street culture (EFFEKT, n.d.).”*

The Game Streetmekka approach, specifically its focus on street culture, offers an excellent example of an architectural approach impacted by the ‘streets’ whereby the culture of the ‘streets’ is a direct response from the youth. The ‘street’ culture and accessible nature of this space affords the youth, and other users of the building, a level of freedom to express themselves through recreational art, dance, skating and whatever else they choose, which is another key factor in the development of youth’s identity.

# BUILDING FUNCTIONS FEED INTO 'STREET' SPACE

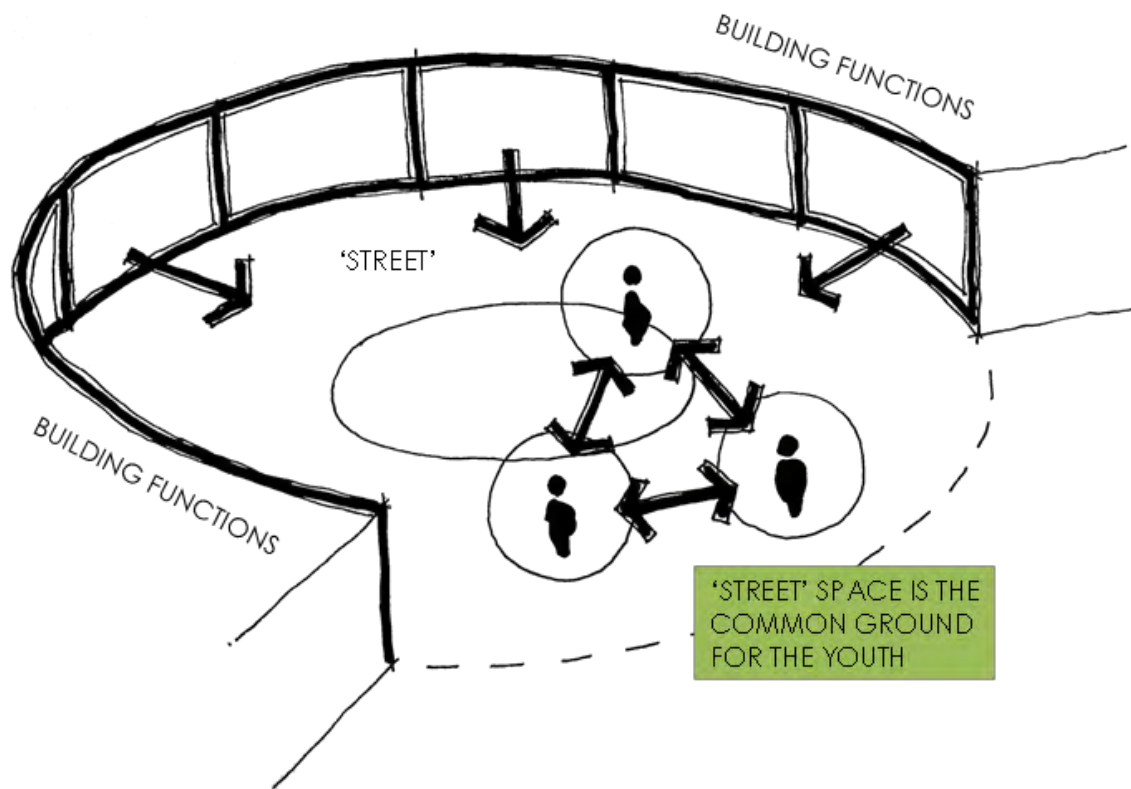


FIGURE 4.10: Sketch of design relevance of the Game Streetmekka to the argument of this research p. n/a  
(Source: author, 2015.)



#### 4.4. A YOUTH HANGOUT – THE ‘STREETS’ AS A THIRD SPACE: **GARY COMER** **YOUTH CENTER IN CHICAGO, USA**



FIGURE 4.11: Exterior photo of the Gary Comer Building p. n/a (Source: Hall, 2009)



FIGURE 4.12: Photo of the seating area overlooking the auditorium of the Gary Comer Building p. n/a (Source: Architectmagazine, 2012)

##### 4.4.1. INTRODUCTION:

The Gary Comer Youth Center, designed by John Ronin Architects, functions as a proactive space for the youth in the area to spend their time after school; a place where they can have fun and learn different skills (Architectmagazine, 2012). Located in the Grand Crossing neighbourhood of Chicago, USA...

*“...the award-winning Gary Comer Youth Center was designed...to specifically support the activities of the South Shore Drill Team and programs for children of the neighbouring Paul Revere School (GCYC, 2012).”*

Gary Comer’s vision was to see that every child be given the chance to discover the world beyond their own neighbourhood, and the Gary Comer Youth Center aims to achieve that vision (GCYC, 2012).

##### 4.4.2. KEY ELEMENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE:

Feeding off the energy of the main auditorium space:

The idea for the design of the center was that the building and all its functions would feed off the energy that was generated by the Drill team in the main Auditorium space (Ronin, n.d.). To do this, the architects proposed a main adaptable gymnasium space (view figure 4.13 and

4.14) to act as a practice space for the 300 member drill team. This then converts into a 600 seat raked auditorium, by means of a deployable theatre seating system, to be used for performances and other functions (ArchDaily, 2011). The architects wrapped the additional educational and recreational spaces around the auditorium on 3 levels with glass walls allowing for transparency between the spaces (ArchDaily, 2011).



FIGURE 4.13: Photo of the main auditorium space in use at the Gary Comer Building p. n/a (Source: GCYC, 2012)



FIGURE 4.14: Photo of the raked theatre seating system used in the auditorium of the Gary Comer Building p. n/a (Source: GCYC, 2012)

#### Youth Enrichment programs:

One of the key features of this center is the combination of multiple, and diverse, youth enrichment programs. Each one of these programs are designed to engage the youth in a holistic learning approach, cultivating unique life skills that they can use to care for and impact their community as well as their future – it is their Comer to college mission (GCYC, 2012). These programs are separated into several areas namely; the Urban Agriculture and Culinary Arts program, the Media and Technology program, the Civic Engagement and Leadership Development program, the Visual, Cultural and Performing Arts program and the Sports, Fitness and Recreation program (GCYC, 2012). To achieve these, the building houses several relatively flexible spaces namely; arts and crafts rooms, computer labs, dance rooms, a recording studio, costume design shop, tutoring and study spaces, classroom, office, exhibition spaces and a roof garden which acts as an outdoor classroom for horticulture and culinary purposes (ArchDaily, 2011).

#### 4.4.3. CONCLUSION AND RELEVANCE TO RESEARCH AND DESIGN:

The Gary Comer Youth Center is designed specifically for the youth and it is making a big impact on the lives of the youth who have been engaged with the center over the years since its construction (GCYC, 2012). The visual openness of the center not only provides a sense of security for the youth, but also fosters a sense of community and curiosity between the different users (ArchDaily, 2011). The center is a good example of the kind of third space which was discussed earlier in reference to a space for the youth outside the boundaries of home and school. This third space is, in essence, a hangout for the youth; a kind of ‘street’ space but due to its nature as a youth center it lacks certain elements of democratic space for the youth to engage with society at large not just their peers. This being said, the program and management provides an excellent base on which to suggest that the ‘streets’ can build youth’s identity, not only on a social and cultural level but also on an educational level, giving the youth access to explore future possibilities.

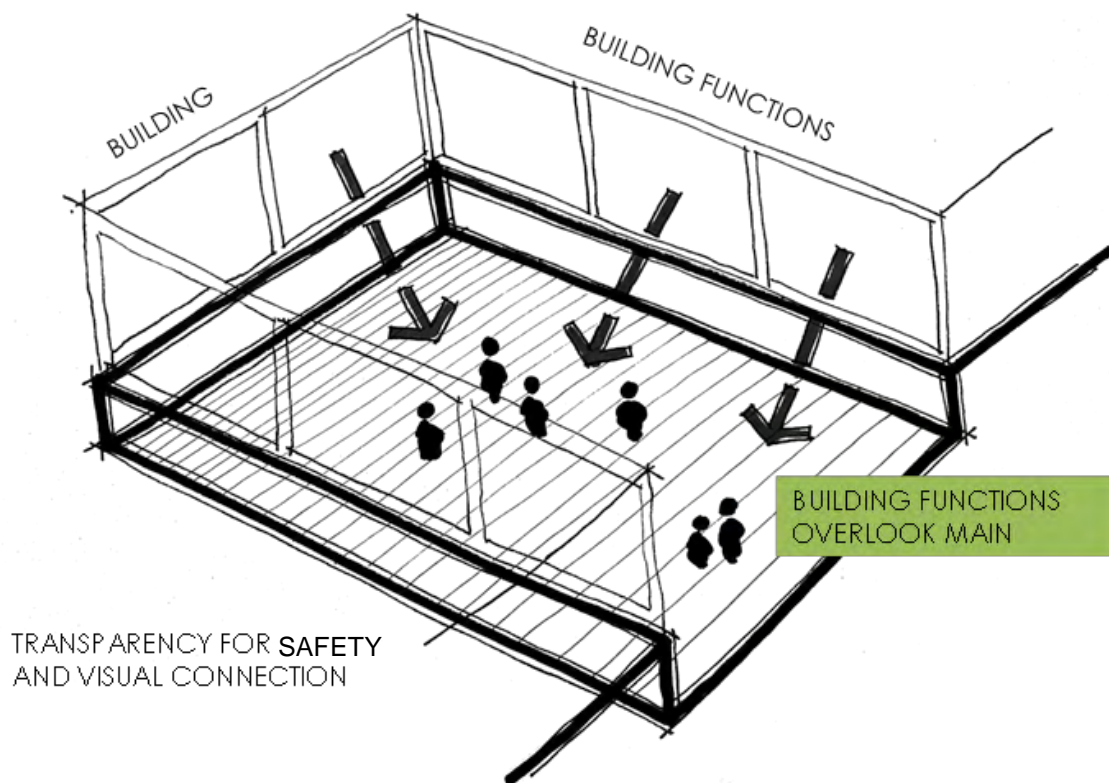


FIGURE 4.15: Sketch of design relevance of the Gary Comer Youth Center to the argument of this research p. n/a (Source: Author, 2015.)

#### **4.5. CONCLUSION:**

The three precedents discussed here, although they are not all-encompassing of the issues presented in the previous chapters, offer a well-defined approach, when considered together, to the connection between architecture and youth's identity. The argument is a simple one, youth's identity is important and this can be seen in the way each precedent has gone about catering for the needs and desires of the youth in the spaces they provide.

The 'streets', as a place or space, has the potential to foster social and cultural values for the youth, specifically in regard to their identity development. This can be seen through all three precedents which each have their own unique interpretation of this idea of the 'streets'. The Daniels Spectrum is all about the community and the spaces allow the youth spaces to feel comfortable interacting with the community outside of the boundaries of home and school, allowing them to develop a good understanding of where they fit in society. In the same way the Gary Comer youth center also provides a space for the youth to spend their time outside of home or school, the third space, but instead of the focus on community interaction the focus is placed

on skills development. This is equally important in the process of development of identity for the youth because it allows them to determine who they are and what they are good at by providing access to a wide variety of activities. The Game Streetmekka responds a little differently by tackling the idea of the 'streets' head on, working with an already existing street culture in a space by formalising it and transforming it through an architectural intervention.

If one uses the idea of the 'streets' as an environment which provides the best opportunity for the youth to test and define their own identity, then it is possible for youth's identity to impact architecture through the 'streets'. This is evident in the design and provisions of all three buildings.







## CHAPTER 5 | FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1. INTRODUCTION:

Chapter five starts to shift from the secondary data on the issues of youth's identity in the 'streets' and its impact on built form, towards the primary research data gathered through interviews and observations of the youth in Kokstad. It was intended that, through thorough examination, the primary research data would support the already existing framework of information discussed in the earlier chapters of this research document in two ways. The first was that this information could be used to highlight that the idea of the 'streets' does exist and what that looks like, specifically in the context of Kokstad. The second aspect would begin to develop a formal understanding of the needs and desires of the youth in Kokstad, as it is understood from the literature that these can be different in nature to youth in other cities. This would be used later in the design phase to provide a stronger base on which to suggest the nature that the 'street' spaces need to take, in order for the impact of youth's identity on the architectural response to be both contextually relevant to Kokstad and successful in its approach.

This two part approach to the primary research data led to a deductive coding system being used, as earlier discussed, to structure the research gathered, from interviews and observations, under two main themes. These include the '*Existing*' and '*Desired*' 'street' spaces for the youth in the context of Kokstad. Before getting into this, though, it is necessary to localize the research by gaining a better understanding of the 'street' environment in Kokstad, based on research and observations.

## 5.2. A CASE STUDY OF THE ‘STREETS’ OF KOKSTAD:

The case study of the ‘streets’ in Kokstad looks at the current state of these spaces in the area of study, to better understand the needs and desires of the youth from a contextual point of view. The observations noted in this case study will be used to provide the base on which the architectural response can develop as well as providing a better understanding of the spaces to which the youth make reference during the interviews.

### 5.2.1. INTRODUCTION:

Kokstad is a relatively small town, surrounded by farmsteads and low cost housing, located on the border between Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Eastern Cape. According to a study on the residential property statistics conducted in 2011 it was listed as one of the fastest growing town in Kwa Zulu Natal with a population of around 66 000 people (Jacobs, 2011). The area is known mainly for its surrounding farms (it’s a major export being cheese and other dairy products) and picturesque natural scenery which provides visitors with many hiking, camping, fishing and bird watching opportunities (SA-Venues, n.d.).

### 5.2.2. LOCATION:



FIGURE 5.1: Map of South Africa showing the location of Kokstad p. n/a (Source: wayleaves, n.d.)

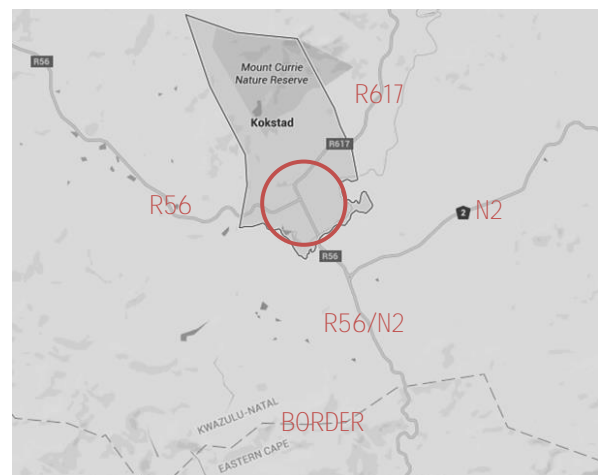


FIGURE 5.2: Map of Kokstad showing road networks p. n/a (Source: Google maps edited by author, 2015)

The town is located at the foothill of Mount Currie nature reserve in the Harry Gwala District (previously known as the Sisonke District) of Kwa-Zulu Natal. It falls on the intersection between the R56 and the R617 with the N2 running just south of Kokstad, see figure 5.2 (Aurecon, 2013). It is considered a tertiary node within the Kwa-Zulu Natal border and located about 2 hours and 49 mins outside of Durban (Aurecon, 2013).

### 5.2.3. HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT:

The town of Kokstad was named after the Adam Kok III who was one of the leaders of the tribe of Griquas that first settled in this area (Localgovernment, n.d.). They arrived in 1863 and settled on the steep slopes of Mount Currie, which made it very difficult for them to build anything bigger than small mud huts (Dower, 1902 and Aurecon, 2013). The tribe of Griquas later made a request to have the reverend William Dower come to their new home to establish a mission post, which he did (Aurecon, 2013). In the early 1870's the Reverend Dower and Edward Barker, who was a surveyor, decided to move down the slope of the mountain and began to lay out a formalised plan of what is now Kokstad (Dower, 1902). This was, however, initially rejected by the tribe of Griquas who did not want to leave but they were later forced to make the move down from the mountain due to harsh changes in the weather on the slopes of mount Currie (Aurecon, 2013). The town was named Kokstad in 1877 (stad being a Dutch name for city or town and Kok after Adam Kok III) (Localgovernment, n.d.).

Hope street (the R617/R56 route running relatively North-South cutting through the town – view figure 28 and 29 below) is clearly the dominant route and the 'spine' along which all the industrial and commercial sectors developed, with the residential zones forming around these areas (Aurecon, 2013). The effects of Apartheid are clear in the development structure of the town, seen in the disconnection that is visible between the outlying areas namely Extension 7, Shayamoya, Bhongweni, Horseshoe and Bambayi (Aurecon, 2013).

The social demographics paint an interesting picture of the town. The census, taken in 2011, highlights that almost half the population is under the age of 25, with about 37 % being under the age of 18 (Statssa, 2011). Black Africans make up the majority of the population, roughly 88%, with the coloured community making about 9 % and whites making about 2% (Statssa, 2011). The predominant language spoken in this area is isiXhosa, with almost 73% of the community having isiXhosa as their first language (Statssa, 2011).



Figure 5.3: Kokstad nodes and linkages showing the main commercial and industrial area p. n/a (Source: Citythinkspace, 2012)

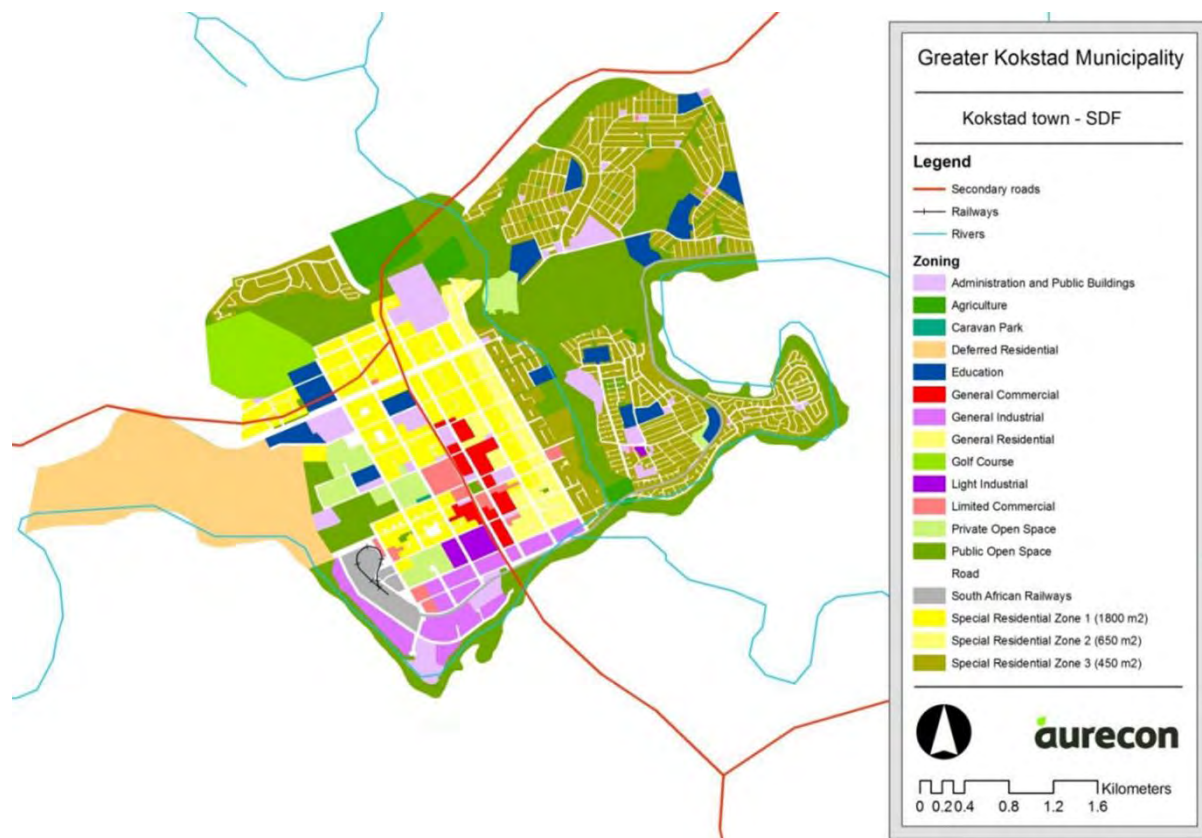


Figure 5.4: Kokstad zoning map p. 81 (Source: Aurecon, 2013)

#### 5.2.4. JUSTIFICATION OF THE CHOICE OF CASE STUDY:



Figure 5.5: Photograph of youth in the streets of Kokstad p. n/a (Source: She' Gill, 2015)

As earlier expressed the issue of youth's identity, more specifically the youth's search for identity, is one that is not commonly or adequately addressed by the built environment. This is especially true for Kokstad where, unlike other more developed towns and cities in South Africa, the built environment provides very little access to spaces that address the youth in Kokstad and their search for their own identity. The town provides an interesting avenue to explore youth's search for identity in the 'streets' because there is little access to spaces that allow the youth the freedom to affirm their own identity so the 'street' spaces are relatively easy to identify and their presence on the 'streets' is common and noticeable. The youth in Kokstad have a strong desire for these spaces, but more so that these spaces represent their needs and desires as they begin to try and define who they are.

#### 5.2.5. EMPIRICAL DATA:

The identification of several 'street' spaces was carried out through observation and responses from the youth during the interview process. A basic attempt was made to understand some of the key feature of these spaces for the youth, but due to the limited responses from the youth a large part of this understand was based on observations made and some discussions with several of these youth whilst in the 'street' environment. These spaces have been listed in figure 5.6 below and an analysis of each space will be briefly discussed. The numbered spaces (1, 2 and 3) are a representation of the 'streets' as a singular space



where the youth like to ‘hangout’ whereas the ‘street’ spaces marked A, B, C and D are a representation of the ‘streets’ as an elongated stretch of spaces along the actual physical street. Here the environment of the street and its location, in terms of the connections to various common places, make them the more dominantly used ‘street’ spaces around Kokstad. It is to be noted that the youth wonder around more than just these streets however these are the common ones identified.



FIGURE 5.6: Aerial view of Kokstad showing the main youth ‘street’ spaces p. n/a (Source: Google maps edited by author, 2015)

‘Street’ space A (the highlighted section of Hope street on figure 5.6 as well as figure 5.7) is the most predominant street running through Kokstad, which connects Kokstad to various surrounding areas as the main route in and out. The road is fairly wide and difficult to cross because it does tend to become quite busy at times. Raised pedestrian walkways at the intersections make a big difference by slowing the traffic down and making it safer to cross. A substantial portion of the retail and commercial businesses have developed along this street edge which plays a large part in activating this ‘street’ space along which the community, and the youth, move. The street space isn’t the most pedestrian friendly area in Kokstad but the high volume of pedestrian users and access to the various retail and commercial businesses makes it a predominant space.



FIGURE 5.7: ‘Street’ space A – Hope street p. n/a (R56)  
(Source: Google maps edited by author, 2010)



FIGURE 5.8: ‘Street’ space B – Main street p. n/a  
(Source: Google maps edited by author, 2010)

‘Street’ space B (the highlighted section of Main street on figure 5.6 as well as figure 5.8) falls between the main shopping complex in Kokstad (Rolyats) and the Old Public square where the taxi rank is now located. This street appears to be to more locally orientated street and, in much the same way as Hope Street (‘street’ space A), it is lined with retail and commercial businesses as well as town hall, the museum and library, which all play a major role in activating the ‘street’ spaces along which the community, and the youth move. Recent upgrades to the pavements, raised pedestrian walkways at intersections, open connections between the building facades and the street edge as well as high volume of pedestrian activity make this area a friendlier pedestrian space than that of Hope Street, but still not the most ideal and the youth’s presence here is purely reliant on the connections the street itself provides to other spaces.

‘Street’ space C (the highlighted section of St John’s Street on figure 5.6 as well as figure 5.9) is noticeably different to the previous two streets. Although the nature of the street is different to the first two in that it’s more of a residential neighbourhood environment, it is a lot more successful as a ‘street’ space for the youth who can be seen constantly playing in the street and moving up and down it. The low walls and see-through fenced houses add a level of comfort in terms of safety for the youth. The road is considerably narrower than the first two streets with more space being given over to the grassed pavements for the pedestrians. Constant tree cover also makes a big difference to the feel of the space. The ‘street’ here is used both as a hangout space and also a means for pedestrians, coming from either side, to connect to the main shopping complex.





FIGURE 5.9: 'Street' space C – St John's Street p. n/a  
(Source: Google maps edited by author, 2010)



FIGURE 5.10: 'Street' space D – The Avenue p. n/a  
(Source: Google maps edited by author, 2010)

'Street' space D (the highlighted section of The Avenue on figure 5.6 as well as figure 5.10) is an interesting spaces and has the same neighbourhood feel, although it is a mix or residential and retail. The road is another major network in and out of Kokstad but the provision of a large grassed space lined with an avenue of trees adds a unique essence to this 'street' that is not found elsewhere in Kokstad. The youth here also use this 'street' space as a hangout space where they like to take photos. Another important feature to this 'street' specifically for the youth is the movie store which is, for most of them, the major reason they use this route.



FIGURE 5.11: Aerial view of the main shopping complex - 'street' space 1 p. n/a (Source: Google maps, 2015)

The ‘Street’ space 1 (view figure 5.6 and figure 5.11) is the main shopping complex in Kokstad. The anchor store is the Rolyats Spar which is why it is sometimes referred to, by the youth and community alike, as Rolyats. A number of different retail outlets are situated in this one location and this wider variety of choice is one of the key aspects that make this space a major node for the youth in Kokstad. Specifically relevant to the youth are the different clothing stores (roughly 6/7), the Spur restaurant and a few fast food, take-away restaurants.

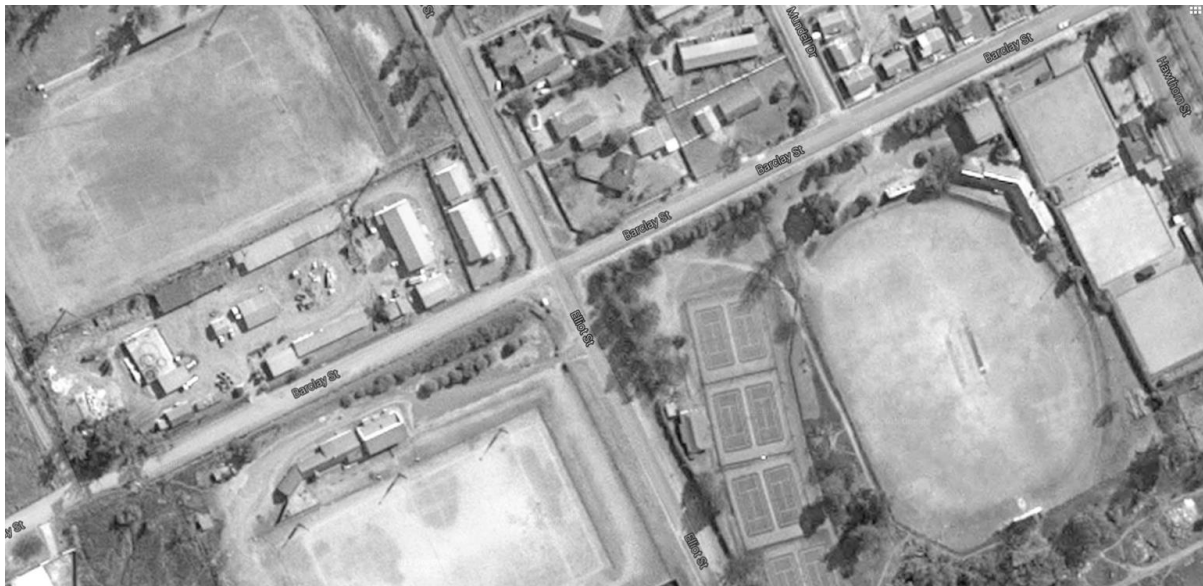


FIGURE 5.12: Aerial view of the sporting grounds - ‘street’ space 2 p. n/a (Source: Google maps, 2015)

‘Street’ spaces 2 (view figure 5.6 and figure 5.12) is the main sports grounds in Kokstad. All around the world sports and youth generally tend to go together quite well and Kokstad is no exception. The youth enjoy getting the chance to play various sporting activities, however, whether or not they are free to use these spaces, remains unknown among many of them. There are several different activities here namely cricket, rugby, soccer, tennis, bowls and squash.



FIGURE 5.13: Aerial view of the golf club and golf course - 'street' space 3 p. n/a (Source: Google maps, 2015)

'Street' space 3 (view figure 5.6 and figure 5.13), is the golf club and golf course. This space in much the same way as the sporting grounds also provides the youth with a place to have some fun and get rid of some energy, if you enjoy golf because that's all there is to offer here. They are, however, in the process of building another cricket field. Youth under the age of 18, who are registered, are able to play for free.

#### 5.2.6. CONCLUSION:

The purpose of this case study was really about providing a contextual analysis of the 'streets' of Kokstad in an attempt to understand the environments referred to in the research, at a localized scale. The intent was to illustrate the current 'street' spaces along with the elements of these spaces that make them what they are. This is of particular importance in understanding the responses that will be discussed in the next 2 section of this chapter to provide a more informed architectural response to youth's identity in Kokstad.

### 5.3. EXISTING ‘STREET’ SPACES:

The idea of the ‘streets’ is one which has come through the secondary research data and therefore it was necessary for the researcher to adapt the understanding of the youth’s reference to spaces they enjoy ‘hanging out’ in (outside of their home or school) as the implied essence of the ‘street’ to which this document refers.

With this in mind, several sub-themes have been expounded to fully examine the responses from the youth and the observations, with regard to the existing ‘street’ spaces for the youth in the context of Kokstad.

#### 5.3.1 Activities afforded by the ‘street’ environment

*“They also like to walk around a lot because it kills a lot of time...walking to the shops and around them allows her to stretch her legs, to get some fresh air and sun..” – Interview 1, 2015.*

The ‘streets’ of Kokstad provide two distinct types of activities. The first is ‘active’ where the youth use the ‘streets’ as a means to keep themselves busy during the day and use up some of their energy, it gives them something to do. This usually involves walking around town, between friend’s houses or the main shopping complex, or it comes in the form of physical sporting activities where the youth either end up at the golf course, or they attempt to play tennis, squash etc. There are a group of sporting facilities, namely rugby, soccer, cricket, squash, bowls and tennis, on the western side of Kokstad but generally it is understood that you have to know someone who is part of the club, or be a part of the club yourself, in order to play there. This costs money and the youth generally would rather not play than have to pay. There is also a scout group, a karate class which meet at the scout hall and a dance hall held at one of the local churches.

*“They do also sometimes go out somewhere in town and just walk around and chat with their friends, they don’t really do much else other than chill.” – Interview 8, 2015*

The second idea is ‘passive’ where the youth use the ‘street’ spaces as a means to ‘chill’ and ‘hangout’ with their friends. Here again, the motive expressed by the youth is usually around something to keep themselves busy. For the girls this involves spending time in the main shopping complex looking through the clothing stores (mostly just window shopping and/or

trying outfits on and taking photos, with no intention to actually buy anything). The guys tend to prefer to stick to the active environments and, if they want to relax or ‘hang out’, this is usually done at someone’s house or at Spur (the local restaurant) in the main shopping complex. The youth collectively enjoy going to the Spur as the local meeting point and ‘hangout’ space.

### 5.3.2 Elements of the ‘streets’ which enable these activities

*“Usually they start by walking to other friends’ houses and then they go all over town, they mostly walk everywhere because everything is so close.” – Interview 1, 2015*

In the case of the physical streets the slow pace of the town, neighbourhood feel and large sidewalks lined with trees makes the street environments a lot friendlier for the youth but also the relatively small scale of the town in general makes it fairly easy to walk to almost anywhere because of the close proximity.

*“Rolyats (the main shopping complex, given the name Rolyats by the youth because of the main anchor being the spar, which is called Rolyats) has a lot of choices in terms of different types of shops which give them more to do.” – Interview 2, 2015*

In terms of the main shopping complex the youth like this space because of it affords them the ability to choose from several different activities. They can either wonder through the different clothing stores or go to the Spur and just ‘chill’ if they all have enough money on them. The sporting venues are a great opportunity to have fun and burn some energy but the uncertainty of whether they’re allowed to use the facilities or not sometimes turn them away.

### 5.3.3 ‘Streets’ vs. the home

*“She feels like there are too many people at home (her family is too big) but also when she goes out she has freedom to do what she wants, without having to worry about someone watching over her or telling her what to do.” – Interview 2, 2015*

It was intended that there would be a clear development of an understanding as to the difference of the home environment and that of the ‘streets’, to the youth but it was found that the youth tended to find it difficult to express this difference. There is something about the ‘streets’ that drive the youth out of the home environment into these spaces, something which

gives the youth something that they cannot get or do at home, but most of them were unaware of why this is so. One of the youth picked up that these environments are more fun but also noted that the home is more comfortable. Another youth mentioned the idea that the streets spaces provide a sense of freedom, to do what she wants without close parental control, but this was not reiterated in any of the other interviews.

#### 5.3.4 Lack of youth space

*“There is very little else to do or places to go in Kokstad, the town is very boring.” – Interview 5, 2015*

The clear lack of spaces and facilities that cater to the youth was a common theme that ran throughout all the interviews. Kokstad has a lot to offer but not much that accommodates the youth and not much specifically for the youth. Through various social media platforms, the youth in Kokstad are very conscious of what other youth have access to, in cities around South Africa (particularly Durban and Pietermaritzburg) as well as the rest of the world, particularly in terms of ‘street’ spaces. This makes them even more aware of what Kokstad lacks.

#### 5.3.5 ‘Streets’ as a network

It is clear, from the interviews and observations, that the ‘streets’ are about more than just a space. The ‘streets’, both in the physical sense as a street and metaphorically as a space embodying the principles expressed earlier, is the environment that connects people. Although the youth struggled to express reasons for why these spaces are different to their home or school, they do choose to spend a large amount of their time here and when they do it is usually only when they are going to meet their friends or when they are with a group of friends. The ‘streets’ allow them to meet and connect with friends as well as other people.

*“She enjoys the fact that it’s a small town which means they are bound to meet people they know at the shops, but they can also meet new people if they’re polite.” – Interview 1, 2015*

### 5.3.6 Identity and the ‘streets’

The fact that the youth are with their friends in these spaces may link to something more than just having something to do, to keep them busy. A link can be drawn between the youth looking for a space for that they can lay claim and that of the issue of their identity as expressed earlier in this document. The youth are looking to their peers, and others, to find where they fit in society but as it was anticipated this is not something that was expressed from the youth’s perspective. It was rather based on an understanding of the research involving their behavioural patterns and observing this element playing out as they spoke about their presence and activities on the ‘streets’.

## 5.4. DESIRED ‘STREET’ SPACES:

This second main theme shifted away from what Kokstad possesses, towards what the youth would like to see in Kokstad. This approach was aimed at figuring out the needs and desires of the youth, specifically in Kokstad, to gain a contextual understanding and, therefore, aid the design phase of this research in providing a space more suited for these youth. Several sub-themes were also developed here in order to address all the concerns raised in the primary research data.

### 5.4.1 Active spaces

*“Kokstad definitely needs some more recreational facilities for the youth.” – Interview 7, 2015*

There was a strong sense, among all the youth interviewed, about the need for more recreational facilities where the youth can go to have fun with their friends, a place to keep themselves busy whilst at the same time getting rid of some of their energy. There were a number of activities that were listed by the youth which they felt would make Kokstad a lot better, most of which involved the desire for more outdoor orientated spaces. These included an ice-rink, decent park spaces with more amenities for the youth, a public swimming pool, tenpin bowling, paintballing and more access to various sporting activities.

#### 5.4.2 Passive spaces

*“If Kokstad had a mall or a place where they could all go and hangout; a place to either go watch a movie or eat out ,other than just a spur, that would definitely attract a lot of youth in Kokstad. She also thinks a few more clothing stores would be awesome so they have some more choices.” – Interview 9, 2015*

As much as there was a strong desire among the youth for active spaces, to have fun with friends, there was equally as much of a desire for social spaces. These are passive spaces which allow the youth to ‘hangout’ or ‘chill’ with their friends and it is these spaces which represent the idea of the ‘streets’ best; as an environment for the youth to test and define their own identity. There most overwhelming response from the youth was a desire for some sort of movie house or cinema space but there was a strong desire for outdoor spaces, with trees and benches for them to relax. Caution was, however, raised by some of the youth because Kokstad can get very cold in winters so they need indoor spaces to ‘chill’ as well when the weather is bad. Another idea was informed by that of a youth center (for the older youth who are beginning to think about their future) where the youth can spend time in but, at the same time, be educated about future possibilities and taught different skills to further themselves.

*“For the older guys it would be nice if they had a way to promote themselves or to promote Kokstad, something similar to a place where they can learn skills or have help in terms of tertiary education.” – Interview 7, 2015*

#### 5.4.3 Community connections

There is very little to go in in reference to a desire for connections to the local community however one of the youth did note that part of the reason the ‘street’ spaces are enjoyable is because you get to meet people, and by that it was understood that this referred to both new people and friends, young people and old. Kokstad is small and the majority of people are friendly. During observations this was also noted as well as a reference to an old youth ‘hangout’ space that a group of people started. This space was designed to entertain the youth but it didn’t last very long because the youth eventually lost interest and stopped coming. It could be possible that the youth lost interest because they were looking for something more than just a place to be entertained. Malone (2002) made mention to the fact that youth-



specific spaces tend to sometimes be unsuccessful because, often, they do not provide a vital connection to the community for the youth...

*“...who do not want to be excluded or be invisible in the everyday life of their cities (Malone, 2002).”*

But in reality, there could have been a number of other factors which caused this.

#### 5.4.4 Safety and feelings of comfort

Issues of safety and comfort are quite significant for the youth, especially the younger ones. The ‘streets’ are a space for them to get out but a lot of them still enjoy the home environment because of its familiarity and comfort. When they are out in the ‘streets’ they tend to try and avoid the areas they are unfamiliar with or areas they feel are dangerous.

*“She does not like the fact that one of the places where a lot of people like to hang out (in Rolyats) has a liquor store next to it and they sometimes have to deal with drunken men flirting with them.” – Interview 1, 2015*

#### 5.4.5 Access to current youth trends

Lastly, but certainly not least, is the desire to have access to current youth trends. As earlier noted, the youth are very aware of these trends and what other youths have access to. This is partly through the various social media platforms, which have become an important part of their lives, and it has lead them to a very well defined idea of what they want to see here in Kokstad. They have a desire to conform in the sense that they want to have equal access to what the youth in other places have.

## 5.5. CONCLUSION:

The primary research was quite successful in, firstly, expressing the existence and nature of the 'street' environment in Kokstad and secondly, providing a base to respond to youth's identity in a contextual and effective manner. It was anticipated that the youth would be very difficult to talk to without the discussion going too far off topic but it was surprisingly quite the opposite reaction. The youth were, for the most part, very good at answering the questions posed to them, almost too well in that it was quite difficult to get them to add anything more than just a straight forward answer to the questions. None the less, it was still was a really insightful process and one that provides a good base on which to motivate for the activities and spaces necessary to foster a successful environment for the development of youth's identity within the Kokstad environment.

In conclusion one response stood out during all of these interviews;

*"When she was younger she didn't really enjoy Kokstad because, other kids her age that lived in the city, had a lot of places to go and things to do, but Kokstad has nothing. As she has grown up, though, she has come to realise that Kokstad is actually a great place to live and she is grateful that this was her home." - Interview 4, 2015*





## **CHAPTER 6 | CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1. INTRODUCTION:**

This intention of this final chapter of the document is summarise and conclude all the information collected and analysed during this research process by attempting to answer the key questions which developed out of the initial aims and objectives set out in chapter one. Just to refresh these objectives that the study aimed to achieve were:

1. To understand youth's identity.
2. To understand the relationship between the youth's identity and streets' as a place of expression.
3. To examine the presence and activities of the youth in the 'streets'.
4. To investigate how youth's identity impacts on 'street' and architectural design.
5. To use this background research on youth's identity in designing a proposed youth orientated lifestyle centre.

The information summarised here will assist in providing a broad outline of the research and, therefore, expressing the process followed, throughout the document, to achieve the objectives of the research. This will be used to motivate for an architectural solution that adequately addresses youth's search for identity in the 'streets', which can then allow the research to bridge into the design stage of the dissertation, towards the design of a youth orientated Lifestyle Center for Kokstad.

## **6.2. RESPONDING TO THE KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

### **6.2.1. What is youth's identity?**

There has been a lot of discussion in this research around what youth's identity is, or rather what it refers to, and this has been quite an edifying process in seeking to understand the impacts that it has on the youth themselves. In short it is understood that youth's identity refers to a collection of individual's (the youth's) own unique and personal sense of identity. The youth, as they are referred to in this research, are between the ages of 13-19 and are in the process of attempting to test and define who they are; their identity. This is what the research aimed to investigate; it is not so much about giving the youth a sense of identity, but rather unpacking what they are seeking in the formation of their own identity.

### **6.2.2. What is the relationship between youth's identity and the 'streets' as a place of expression?**

After a clear understanding of the youth's search for identity, the research then began to build the idea of the 'streets' as the space where this search occurs. The idea of the 'streets' links to several different thoughts around the metaphoric representation of what streets of the city used to be, the community building spaces that connected people, and connected people with place. These spaces act as a kind of third space for the youth, a place outside the boundaries of home and school, and because of that they have the potential to allow the youth the freedom to develop their own boundaries. The process of understanding what these boundaries are, which occurs through continuous testing, eventually leads to a clear establishment of their own sense of identity. This is why the 'streets', as a space for the youth, play a vital role in the development of their own identity; giving them the opportunity to test and define their own identity, an expression of who they are as a person relative to their position in society and place among their peers. Rob white addressed it quite well stating that the 'street'...

*"...represents for many young people a place to express themselves without close parental or 'adult' control, at little or no cost in commercial or financial terms. It is also a sphere or domain where things happen, where there are people to see and where one can be*

*seen by others. In short, for many young people the street is an important site for social activity (White, 1994, pp. 109)."*

#### 6.2.3. What does youth's presence and activities in the 'streets' say about their needs and desires in these spaces?

The youth's continued presence and activities in the 'streets' is a direct reflection of their needs and desires. The youth are looking to the 'streets' to provide opportunities for themselves to figure out who they are and where they fit within the bigger scheme of things. As much as this is a desire for these youth, it is also a necessity because, as the research highlighted, their identity development had a lot to do with determining future possibilities and reducing the risks of them getting involved in potentially risqué behaviours (Dumas et al, 2012 and Malone, 2002). The youth have a strong connection and desire to belong, in and among their groups (of friends), Their time spent 'hanging out' in the 'street' spaces, which only usually occurs in these groups, further communicates the importance of their desire for identity among their peers. Their desire to establish their identity within society is also evident in the failures of many youth-specific spaces which lack a wider connection to the community as earlier discussed.

#### 6.2.4. How can youth's identity influence the design of 'streets' and the associated architecture?

The 'streets' as a space, representative of the environment where youth are able to, comfortable and effectively, test and define their own sense of identity, has the ability to become a space with an incredible amount of social and cultural value for the youth and the local community alike. This is, however, only if the 'street' space itself reflects the desires and needs of the youth relative to that specific area. Kokstad is unique because of the clear lack of youth orientated spaces and therefore, the youth really have no other places to go. There is a need to understand exactly what the youth are looking for and these ideas, relative to Kokstad, were expressed through the observations and interviews with the youth in Kokstad. Any approach to the design of youth orientated spaces, and architecture, must attempt to address the needs and desires of the youth in that area in order for the proposal to

re-animate the ‘street’ environment for the youth, which has the capacity to cultivate youth’s identity in a positive way.

#### 6.2.5. How can this research be interpreted in designing a proposed youth orientated lifestyle centre?

This rest of this idea will be explore more in depth in the design stage of the dissertation but, from the research, one can gain a clear understanding of the nature of the ‘street’ space and how this space needs to reflect the needs and desires of the youth, if it is to effectively foster positive identity development in the youth. Architecture, which draws from the ideals of these ‘street’ spaces by providing a new kind of ‘street’ space, must therefore respond to the needs and desires of the youth. This response must be contextually based.

In short, the success of a ‘street’ space, which is specifically orientated to the youth in Kokstad, ought to provide elements of a passive and active environment to give the youth a mix of different spaces to keep themselves busy or just relax and ‘hangout’ with their friends depending on how they feel. The ‘street’ space must also be connected to the community because the youth don’t want to be isolated from society, rather integrated into it in a positively reinforcing way. Aspects of safety and comfort must also be acknowledged because this will play a considerable role in the likelihood of the youth to take to such a space. Lastly the ‘street’ space ought to provide the youth with aspects of regional and global connectivity as the youth are very conscious of, and have a desire for, what other youth have access to.

A youth orientated lifestyle center takes on the essence of a lifestyle center namely, its focus around the enhancement of the somewhat heterotopic ‘street’ environment (real life versions of an idealized or utopian space) and its focus on the lifestyle of the consumers rather than a purely commercially orientated mall environment. By focusing the design of the center more on the youth, in that reflects the nature of the ‘street’ spaces emphasised in the research, it turns the attention even more away from a commercially orientated environment towards a community building environment. By still retaining some of the commercial elements it will provide a vital connection between the youth and the community.

### 6.3. FINAL CONCLUSIONS:

The aim of this research was to understand and emphasize youth's identity by exploring how youth's search for identity in the 'streets', can impact the built form. The intention was to use this study to inform an architecture that responds to the youth's identity; reanimating the essence of the 'streets' through architecture. As a result of the process of analysing and interpreting the primary and secondary research presented in this document it is believed that this aim was achieved in quite an enriching manner. The issue of youth's identity has been thoroughly examined and addressed. The conceptualization of the 'streets' and the link between the 'streets' and youth's identity, in terms of how youth's identity is both tested and established in the 'street' environment, was also studied methodically. Lastly the connection between the 'streets' as a space and architecture as, fundamentally, the design of space was expressed to highlight how these three elements, namely youth's identity, the 'streets' and architecture, are all connected in some way.

In summary:

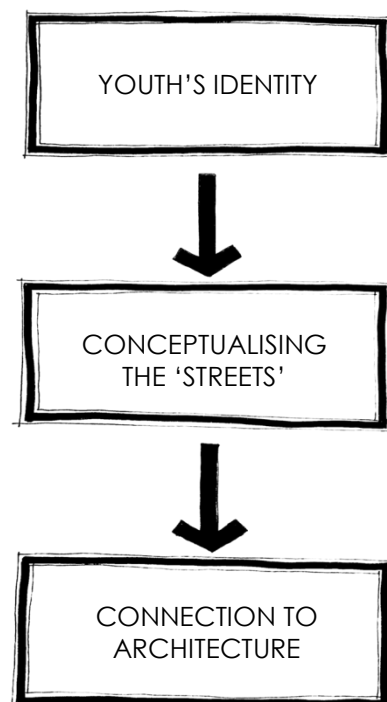


FIGURE 6.1: Flow of the argument (Source: Author, 2015)

The 'Who' of the study was the youth, specifically looking at youth's identity as a social issue in need of addressing. This focus developed out of the observation that the built environment, especially in Kokstad, does not adequately address or support the youth in their



search for their own identity. As expressed in this study, it is understood that youth's identity is important and society ought to be more concerned about it for several reasons namely:

- It determines future possibilities for the youth.
- It has the potential to reduce their risk of getting involved in risqué behaviours.
- It also has the potential to add to the social capital of towns and cities.

The 'What' of the study is the 'streets'. The 'streets' is a metaphoric representation of the idea of what streets used to be looking at the idea of them being the heart of a community, connecting people and place. To the youth it means a lot more in that it becomes a hangout (a place to see and be seen by others) as well as a neutral testing ground (third space) where the youth search for and develop their own identity.

The 'why' of the study is to understand its contribution to built form, focusing specifically on interpreting the place-value of the 'streets' to use as an architectural design tool.

Youth's search for identity is played out in the 'streets'. The 'streets', as a space, has the capacity to impact architecture which then has the potential to impact youth's identity and thus a positively enriching flow is created.

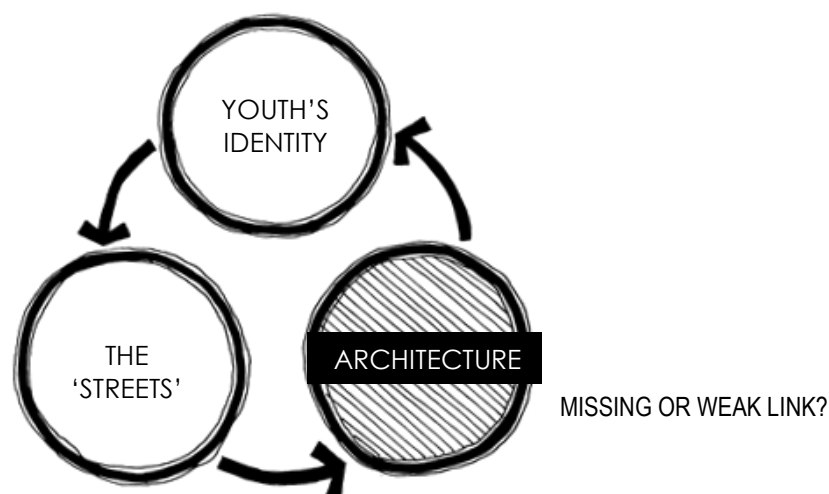


FIGURE 6.2: Creating a flow – expressing the need for an architectural response (Source: Author, 2015)

Through this study two main ideas were developed that form the conceptual framework needed to approach the design phase. Both interpretations work together to form the basis of the 'street' core concept that is central to the architectural approach of the 'street' environment.

The first involves connecting people to place. The 'street' acts as a transitional space where movement creates the potential for social interaction. The 'street' is the spine of the building and represents a journey (view figure 6.3 below).

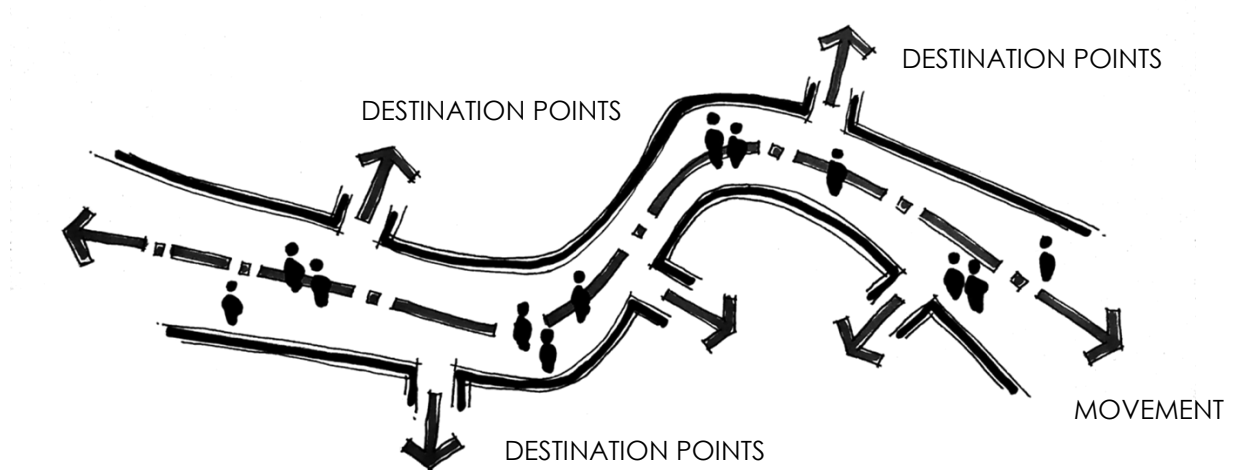


FIGURE 6.3: Connecting people to place (Source: Author, 2015)

The second element of the 'street' core concept involves connecting people with [other] people. The 'street' becomes a destination in itself; a social hangout, a common space for different people [youth] to gather and integrate. The 'street' is a public lounge.

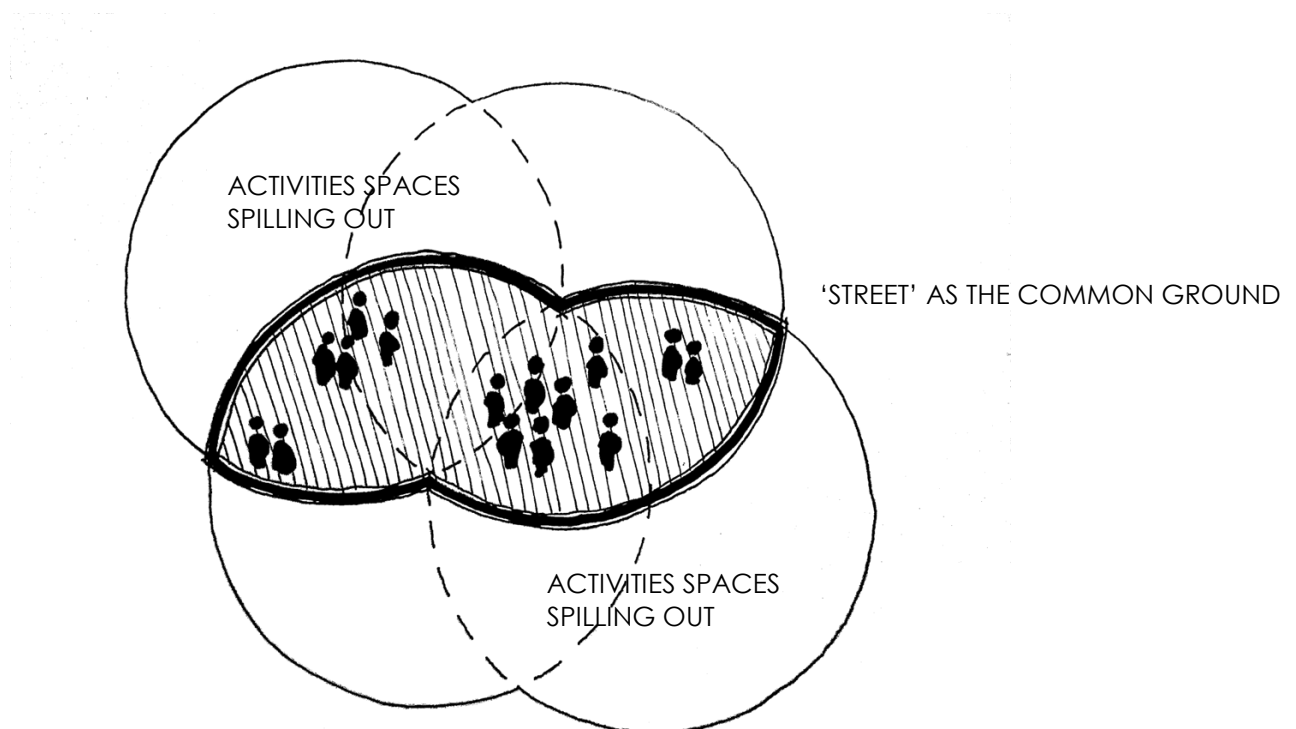


FIGURE 6.4: Connecting people with other people (Source: Author, 2015)

## **6.4 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Researchers looking into the design of spaces for the youth must firstly understand that youth's identity is important in the developmental process of the youth, for a number of different reasons as mentioned earlier. If it is carefully understood and considered within society, and specifically in reference to the design of youth spaces, then it can have the potential to become a space that holds a remarkable amount of social and cultural value within the local community.

The nature of the 'street' environment is one that holds a unique set of values that make it ideal for the development of youth's identity. This has to become an accepted point of view if it is to have any positive impact on the design of youth space that has a cultural significance above its functional form. The research has clearly shown that the 'streets' have the potential to be something more than it currently is, because the youth have already begun to establish themselves in these spaces, but it needs to be recognised.

By recognized, it also means the approach must take into consideration the case specific surroundings. Youth's identity is not always the same and it is, therefore, recommended that any desire to address youth's identity, and the design of positive 'street' spaces, be analysed contextually. This in the sense that one begins by seeking to understand the needs and desires of the youth in the area, who are most likely to use the space, which can be done through surveying the current 'street's' spaces in the area and questioning the youth as well.

Lastly the 'streets', and all that these spaces represent, can be used as an architectural design tool through understanding and interpreting the place-value of the existing 'streets' spaces. The youth need and desire these spaces and this is especially true for Kokstad because there is a clear lack of response, from the built environment, towards the youth and youth's identity.

The primary research data has shown quite clearly the current state of the 'street' environment in Kokstad as well as what the youth in Kokstad desire. In order for any design to incorporate a successful, sustainable 'street' environment within the architecture, the space must respond to the needs and desires of the community, and specifically the youth. Several key elements were defined in the responses from the primary research data and it is worth considering these elements in the design of a youth-orientated lifestyle center for Kokstad. These must, however, be compared and assessed along with the other issues highlighted

earlier in this research document. It is also important to note that the nature of the 'street' environment lends itself well to a horizontally orientated form as the most successful approach, and this suits the environment in Kokstad well as the context would not support buildings that are vertical in nature.

The youth desire a space to call their own, one which exists outside of the boundaries of their home and school, in order to test and develop their own sense of identity and the 'streets' can and do provide this for them. The nature of an architectural approach that reanimates the essence of the 'streets', in connection with youth's identity, must seek to provide a sense of belonging for the youth but in a way that also opens itself to allow for a connection with the community at large without losing its connection to the youth. This can be easily achieved, as was expressed through the precedents discussed earlier, in that one can separate functions to give the youth a space but still allow for a close visual and physical connection to community, in other spaces, to give them a sense of standing within society and this ought to be explored.

## **6.5. SELF REFLECTION:**

The overall process of compiling this dissertation is one which has certainly been edifying and difficult, but a good kind of difficult. Good things sometimes do require a lot of effort and can be difficult at first, but once one begins to apply their mind, the end product can be rewarding.

It was undoubtedly important to settle on an initial key focus as soon as possible, to which one can begin to set up a structure to follow. This helped a lot, to make sure that the information always reflected to outcomes intended without deviating too much from the aim of the research. It did, however, take a while to set up the structure so that it would be successful in achieving the objectives set out in the beginning. It must be said that the sooner this can be done, the better because the longer it gets left behind, the harder it becomes to refocus all the endless amounts of information.

When questioning youth it was found that it definitely helps to be a bit more direct because they tend to answer exactly what is asked of them, unless they don't actually have an answer. It was surprising to find that many of them struggled to go beyond or deeper than the question and this often required a bit of prompting.

Lastly, a fresh perspective from other people is always beneficial. Without the help of a supervisor and several friends, it would have been difficult to pick up on some areas that were not initially considered. It can sometimes become easy to get lost in the research and an outside opinion is needed or a suggestion to improve the way in which ideas are presented to make more sense to the people who have not read the same body of research.

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**APPENDIX A:**

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Sample of interviews, information sheets and consent forms

## **SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE:**

### NAME OF INTERVIEWEE:

- This will not be shared, only used to help me when I need to sort the information.
- 

### INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT (read at the beginning of the interview):

- Firstly I would just like to thank you for meeting with me and helping me with my study.
- This interview is part of a project that I have to do, and I want to write about the things I learn from you, where you spend your time when you're not at home and school and why you choose those specific places.
- I have some questions that I would like to ask you but I want this to be more of a discussion so feel free to add anything which you feel is important.
- If at any time you do not wish to answer a question or you would like to end the interview please feel free to say so.
- With your permission, I may also quote some of the things you say in the interview. To do this I will need a fake name, have you got any suggestions?

Use this name:

---

### QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.
  - How old are you?
  - What school do you go to?
  - What grade are you in?
  - What do you enjoy spending your time doing?
  - Where do you spend most of your time?

[Note: Keep this part of the discussion fewer than 8-10 minutes]

2. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):
  - When you are with your friends, where do you go?
  - What do you do?
  - Mark out spaces on a map and use these to engage with them.
  - (Give them time to respond fully but encourage them to examine their activities thoroughly and list a few of the key areas that stick out – this can include spaces like shops, restaurants, streets etc.).
3. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?
  - (Try to understand the value these spaces hold for them).
  - What characteristics do you enjoy about these places?
  - How is it different to say being at home or school?
  - Do you spend much time there when you are not with your friends?
4. How do other people respond to you being in these places?
  - Do they ever have a problem with you being here? (Parents, other adults, shop owners etc.).
  - If yes, why do you feel they have a problem with it and what do you usually do about it? (Give them time to respond).
5. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?
  - What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?
  - (Firstly, encourage them to think back on what aspects or features of the other spaces they liked and how this new place can express these characteristics).
  - (Secondly, encourage them to express what that they did not enjoy, or wish that these spaces had, and how to accommodate these better in this new space).



6. In conclusion is there anything else you feel you would like to share with me?

Thank them for their time and thank their parents for allowing their children to speak with you.

## **INFORMATION SHEET:**

Dear parent/guardian

### RESEARCHER INFORMATION:

My name is **Devin Audibert** and I am a student at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. I am currently in the process of completing my Masters in Architecture (M.Arch) and this is why I am here conducting research into youth identity in Kokstad for my dissertation.

### INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this research is to understand youth and their search for identity in Kokstad through their presence and activities in and around town. All the information gathered will be used to build a discussion around the need for spaces that allow the youth to, freely and safely, express themselves and find their identity among their friends and within society. In order to gain a better understanding of the desires and needs of the youth I will be conducting several interviews with the youth from around Kokstad.

### CONFIDENTIALITY:

All the information from the interviews and observations will be used purely to strengthen the discussion that my dissertation is making regarding youth identity and its contribution to built form. All personal information, such as the names of the youth, will be kept confidential by coding each participant and where necessary a fake name will be used.

In order to accurately document any information shared during the interviews I would like to gain your permission to record the interviews with an audio device. This information will only be used to assist me in the documentation and will not be shared with anyone. Are you comfortable with this?

YES / NO

### ADDITIONAL DETAILS:

Your child has the choice to participate, or not participate, in the research and he/she will also have the choice to stop participating at any point if they choose to do so. You also have the permission to do this on their behalf if you wish. This will have not negative implications on your or your child.

Once this study is completed I will provide feedback on the research. If you require any additional information or have any other questions please feel free to contact me.

### MY CONTACT DETAILS:

Email: Dkauds@hotmail.com

Cell: 0 (+27) 78 8000 969

SUPERVISOR CONTACT DETAILS:

Name: MN Mthethwa

Email: MthethwaM@ukzn.ac.za

Cell: 0 (+27) 60 875 6655

UKZN RESEARCH OFFICE CONTACT DETAILS:

Name: P Mohun (HSSREC Research Office)

E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Tel: 0 (+27) 31 260 4557

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN DECLARATION OF CONSENT:**

If you are okay with this information and are willing to allow me to conduct an interview with your child please see below:

I..... (Full names of parent/guardian) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to allowing my child to participate in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw him/her from the project at any time, should I so desire, and that my child may do so also.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

DATE

.....

## **YOUTH APPROVAL FORM:**

The purpose of this research is to understand youth and their search for identity in Kokstad through their presence and activities in and around town. All the information gathered will be used to build a discussion around the need for spaces that allow the youth to, freely and safely, express themselves and find their identity among their friends and within society.

In order to gain a better understanding of the desires and needs of the youth I would like to conduct an interview with you as well as several other youth.

Please note:

- Your privacy will be kept as the information you share will not be linked to you.
- You have the choice to participate, or not participate, in the research and you also have the choice to stop participating at any point if you choose to do so.

If this is okay with you please see below:

I..... (Full names of participant) fully understand the purpose of this research and my involvement in it. I also understand that I have the right to pull out of this research and/or interview at any time if I wish to do so.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

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## **APPENDIX B**

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Collected Data - Interviews

## **INTERVIEW 1:**

PSEUDO NAME: Manda

### QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.

- How old are you?

18 years old

- What school do you go to?

She was home schooled until recently where she joined Kokstad College.

- What grade are you in?

Grade 10

- What do you enjoy spending your time doing?

She spends most of her time on her phone chatting to people but also enjoys getting out the house, either to go watch a rugby match or a hockey game or just to spend some time with her friends.

Going up to the library to read books is also something she used to enjoy but she doesn't do that as much anymore because she can just get a book on her phone.

- Where do you spend most of your time?

She currently spends most of her time during the school week at home but when she isn't busy with homework or helping her mom with the baby she likes to get out the house to go watch a rugby game or school hockey matches or just to get together with friends.

2. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):

- When you are with your friends, where do you go?

Usually they start by walking to other friends' houses and then they go all over town, they mostly walk everywhere because everything is so close.

There isn't much else to do but they sometimes like to go shopping if they need anything or if there's a group of them they also like to window shop. This allows them time to bond with one another and kill some hours.

- What do you do?

If they're at the shops (Rolyats mainly because there are a few different shops to look at) they often spend the whole day there so they will buy some crisps and a two litre cool drink and share it whilst they wonder around.

Normally they go in a group of about 4/5.

If they are at each other's houses they like to spend time trying out different hairstyles or just chatting or they will get DVD's from the store and watch movies.

3. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?

They like spending time at each other's homes because they feel comfortable there but they also like to walk around a lot because it kills a lot of time (Murray Street is a nice road to walk on because of the trees and grass areas).

When they walk to the shops they stay away from the doggy areas on the outskirts of town but usually they go to the places closest to them or Rolyats because of the variety of shops there.

- What characteristics do you enjoy about these places?

She like the outdoors, walking to the shops and around them allows her to stretch her legs, to get some fresh air and sun.

She enjoys the fact that it's a small town which means they are bound to meet people they know at the shops, but they can also meet new people if they're polite



- How is it different to say being at home or school?

She admits that it's more comfortable at home. When they are in town or at another friend's house they can't always do what they want but it's still more fun to walk around town.

4. How do other people respond to you being in these places?

- Do they ever have a problem with you being here? (Parents, other adults, shop owners etc.).

Not really because she has a very friendly personality and she tries to show respect in her conduct.

5. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?

- What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?

She values having a place where they can go hangout and have fun, a place to get rid of some energy (which a lot of youth have), and also connect with God more. Currently they have karate classes and scouts and they sometimes run a dance hall at one of the local churches.

6. In conclusion is there anything else you feel you would like to share with me?

She does not like the fact that one of the places where a lot of people like to hang out (in Rolyats) has a liquor store next to it and they sometimes have to deal with drunken men flirting with them.

She has also heard a lot of stories about how some youth like to find places to smoke and drink and party, they like to party a lot in Kokstad.

They also have a huge problem with teenage pregnancy and youth in general having sex as young as 14 or 15 years old.

## INTERVIEW 2:

PSEUDO NAME: Megan

### QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.

- How old are you?

18 years old

- What school do you go to?

She is finished school and currently working as a grade R teacher at Rivermead Christian Academy.

- What grade are you in?

NA

- What do you enjoy spending your time doing?

She enjoys spending most of her time with her friends.

- Where do you spend most of your time?

She spends a lot of her time out at friends' houses or walking to their houses (it's good for exercise).

2. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):

- When you are with your friends, where do you go?

They spend a lot of their time at the shops, mainly at the center by Rolyats shopping or just looking at the movies and games or the clothing stores, or they go to a restaurant (Spur) to have a milkshake.

They also like to go to the DVD store to hire a movie and watch at someone's house (They do whatever they can to pass the time and avoid boredom).

3. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?

The proximity of the places matter, they usually go to the closest unless they have a specific reason to go to another place.

- What characteristics do you enjoy about these places?

Rolyats has a lot of choices in terms of different types of shops which give them more to do.

- How is it different to say being at home or school?

She feels like there are too many people at home (her family is too big) but also when she goes out she has freedom to do what she wants, without having to worry about someone watching over her or telling her what to do.

When she is out with her friends it's different because she isn't always with them but with, unlike her family, and they also get to meet a lot of other people.

- Do you spend much time there when you are not with your friends?

Not really unless she goes to buy something.

4. How do other people respond to you being in these places?

- Do they ever have a problem with you being here? (Parents, other adults, shop owners etc.).

Her parents think she gallivants too much.

5. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?

- What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?

She feels a cinema would be nice (the nearest one is about an hour and a half away) and maybe decent park spaces for them to hangout in (trees, benches, a swimming pool and other things like Durban has on the beachfront with the cycling places etc).

### **INTERVIEW 3:**

PSEUDO NAME: Nevil

#### QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.

- How old are you?

15 years old

- What school do you go to?

Kokstad College

- What grade are you in?

Grade 10

- What do you enjoy spending your time doing?

He enjoys spending as much of his time playing golf.

- Where do you spend most of your time?

He spends the majority of his time on the golf course, at home or at the church (he's learning to play drums, which are at the church, and his house is in close proximity which makes it easy for him go over and play whenever he wants).

2. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):

- When you are with your friends, where do you go?

They spend most there time either at his house or one of his friend's houses, sometimes they walk around in town but its gets very boring because there isn't much to do.

- What do you do?

There isn't much to do so they generally play around outside in the garden (golf or cricket etc.) but there isn't much space either so if they can get outside of town to one of the farms

they enjoy doing that. There is a country club where they have cricket, squash, rugby and soccer which they sometimes go to, that's really nice, but they don't go there a lot unless they sign up to join the club.

3. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?

- What characteristics do you enjoy about these places?

Golf is his favourite sport so that's why he loves being at the golf course.

- Do you spend much time there when you are not with your friends?

Yes, he can practice golf on his own, which he also enjoys doing.

4. How do other people respond to you being in these places?

- Do they ever have a problem with you being here? (Parents, other adults, shop owners etc.).

Some people enjoy seeing youngsters out on the course keeping the sport alive because a lot of other kids just prefer to stay at home and play X-box.

Some old guys, however, do not like that they are there.

- If yes, why do you feel they have a problem with it and what do you usually do about it? (Give them time to respond).

He just tries to be respectful and polite towards them but also tries to avoid them if possible.

5. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?

- What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?

A place with outdoor activities like different sports or a paintball area might be nice.

A mall could also be good, with an ice rink (even if it's a fake one).

A movie house (cinema) would be great too but that might attract a lot of people and he likes that Kokstad is a quiet place.

## INTERVIEW 4:

PSEUDO NAME: Shay

### QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.

- How old are you?

17 years old

- What school do you go to?

Kokstad College

- What grade are you in?

Grade 11

- What do you enjoy spending your time doing?

She likes spending time outdoors. Kokstad is a farm town so they (her friends and family) like going on hikes, horse riding, and bike riding and doing anything you can do outside.

- Where do you spend most of your time?

She spends as much time outside doing stuff as she can.

2. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):

- When you are with your friends, where do you go?

Generally they will just spend time at one of their friend's houses, it usually doesn't matter too much whose house however the weather sometimes plays a part in their decision.

If they go out anywhere its only really the local spur where they go to have something small to eat or just get something to drink.

- What do you do?

They just chill with each other and chat.

3. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?

There's really nothing else for them to do in Kokstad, her friends aren't the type to go out and drink so they just prefer to chill at someone's house.

- How is it different to say being at home or school?

For her it's not really that different, they all act pretty much the same whether they are at home or school

4. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?

- What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?

It's difficult because they like the comfort of home but also Kokstad is more of an outdoorsy kind of town. Maybe having a cinema or an ice rink would be cool, not really like an arcade or something like that because they really like being outside and that's what makes Kokstad unique. They enjoy having the feel of space unlike the city which gets crowded sometimes.

5. In conclusion is there anything else you feel you would like to share with me?

The weather, however, makes it difficult to plan for outdoor events sometimes. In winter it's cold but it doesn't rain so that's nice.

When she was younger she didn't really enjoy Kokstad because other kids her age that lived in the city had a lot of places to go and things to do, but Kokstad has nothing. As she has grown up though she has come to realise that Kokstad is actually a great place to live and she is grateful that this was her home.

## **INTERVIEW 5:**

PSEUDO NAME: Shanice

### QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.

- How old are you?

17 years old

- What school do you go to?

Kokstad College

- What grade are you in?

Grade 11

- What do you enjoy spending your time doing?

She enjoys being around people

- Where do you spend most of your time?

At school and home but she prefers school because she gets to spend a lot of time with her friends here. She doesn't go outside her house very often, other than church and the shopping center, because her parents are a little strict, but maybe like once or twice a month she'll visit a friend's house and they go out and do stuff or stay home and watch a movie.

2. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):

- When you are with your friends, where do you go?

They sometimes walk down to the tennis courts and play tennis, the club allows them to play if there isn't anyone using the courts at the time.

They also like to go into town to go window shopping or just walk around the streets to pass the time. Generally they like to stick to the clothing stores like Mr Price, Identity or Truworths but they sometimes also go to Game.



- What do you do?

They talk a lot and generally just walk around looking at stuff. They also take a lot of photos, mostly of each other, and most of the time in the changing rooms of the clothing stores.

3. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?

There is very little else to do or places to go in Kokstad, the town is very boring.

4. How do other people respond to you being in these places?
  - Do they ever have a problem with you being here? (Parents, other adults, shop owners etc.).

Not really because they not there all the time and sometimes they do buy stuff. Her parents sometimes don't like that they wonder around on the streets, especially when she has homework still to do.

5. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?
  - What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?

The first thing would have to be a cinema. It would also be nice if they had a youth center or a place for them to go spend time but also have people talking to the youth about general stuff like future opportunities for studies etc.

## INTERVIEW 6:

PSEUDO NAME: J

### QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.

- How old are you?

17 years old

- What school do you go to?

St Patricks

- What grade are you in?

Grade 11

- What do you enjoy spending your time doing?

She enjoys spend a lot of her time with friends doing almost anything; it doesn't really matter as long as they keep busy. They generally watch movies, exercise, and go out horse riding or anything along those lines.

- Where do you spend most of your time?

They either spend their time at someone's house or they will go to town and do stuff, such as chilling at the Spur or walking through the clothing stores.

2. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):

- What do you do?

At home they like to watch movies or go out horse-riding; her house is out on a farm and they have horses. When they're in town they mostly window-shop or they go for coffee at Spur.

3. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?

Not really, Kokstad is small so they don't really have any other places to go.

4. How do other people respond to you being in these places?
  - Do they ever have a problem with you being here? (Parents, other adults, shop owners etc.).

Her parents don't like her going to places like the golf club or the rugby club with her friends because of the environment, smoking and drinking etc.

The people in town, like the shop owners, don't really mind them being there.

5. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?
  - What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?

Maybe something like a movie house or an ice-rink would be a lot of fun but otherwise Kokstad has a lot in common with other places that have shopping malls.

## **INTERVIEW 7:**

PSEUDO NAME: PIETER AND GERHARD

### QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.

- How old are you?

They are twins and both are 18 years old

- What school do you go to?

Both go to Kokstad College.

- What grade are you in?

Grade 12

- What do you enjoy spending your time doing?

They both spend most of their time together doing the same stuff, though they have separate personalities. They used to enjoy spending a lot of their time playing sport but when they lost their father, their lives changed a lot and so did their perspectives. Now they find themselves spending most of their time serving at the church or helping out at the farm.

They really enjoy spending time on the farm and outdoors exploring; anywhere close to Nature, that's what they love about Kokstad.

- Where do you spend most of your time?

They both spend most of their time on the farm.

2. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):

- When you are with your friends, where do you go?

They don't really do much because if they want to go out they have to go to places like a restaurant so they only go if they have money. Sometimes they go outside of Kokstad for example the last time they went to a camp which was held about 30 minutes outside of town.

In town they go the Rolyats shopping complex to the Spur or to buy stuff that they need from the Spar.

There isn't much recreational stuff for them to do.

3. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?

Not really

4. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?
  - What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?

Kokstad definitely needs some more recreational facilities for the youth. Maybe something like a public swimming pool or movie theatres would be great. Show grounds to host circuses or other fun activities for the youth in general.

For the older guys it would be nice if they had a way to get promoted themselves or to promote Kokstad, something similar to a place where they can learn skills or have help in terms of tertiary education.

5. In conclusion is there anything else you feel you would like to share with me?

They both really enjoyed attending an open day in Pretoria that gave them an idea of what possibilities there are for them, it broadened their perspectives.

## **INTERVIEW 8:**

PSEUDO NAME: Stacey and Natalie

### QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.

- How old are you?

Stacey is 14 years old and Natalie is 13 years old.

- What school do you go to?

Stacey is at Rivermead Christian Academy and Natalie is at Kokstad Junior

- What grade are you in?

Both are in Grade 7.

- What do you enjoy spending your time doing?

They both enjoy spending time together but if they can't do that then Stacey enjoys chilling and chatting to friends on Facebook whilst Natalie enjoys playing hockey or reading a book.

- Where do you spend most of your time?

They spend the majority of their time at home.

2. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):

- When you are with your friends, where do you go?

Usually they spend most their time together at someone's house or they attend the youth group at the church. They do also sometimes go out somewhere in town and just walk around and chat with their friends, they don't really do much else other than chill or watch movies etc.

3. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?

No

4. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?
  - What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?

They both think that bigger clothing stores or more clothing stores would be a great idea, either or as long as there are more choices to look at. Something like what they have in the malls would be nice; things to do such as ice skating or movies or tenpin bowling, something to keep them busy with stuff to do.

## INTERVIEW 9:

PSEUDO NAME: B

### QUESTIONS:

7. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.

- How old are you?

16 years old

- What school do you go to?

St Patricks

- What grade are you in?

Grade 10

- What do you enjoy spending your time doing?

She enjoys spending most of her time chilling on the farm with her boyfriend farming or going out horse riding.

- Where do you spend most of your time?

She spends most of her time on the farm.

8. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):

- When you are with your friends, where do you go?

When she is with her friends, her and her friends spend a lot of their time out at places like the Spur where they enjoy bonding or just catching up. Sometimes they also chill at the golf club where her mom works. The farm is a bit far out but they do go to her house if they want to go out horse riding.



9. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?

These places are in the area of town where they spend most of their time roaming around so that's why they choose to go there.

- What characteristics do you enjoy about these places?

They feel comfortable because it's familiar to them.

- Do you spend much time there when you are not with your friends?

No not really.

10. How do other people respond to you being in these places?

- Do they ever have a problem with you being here? (Parents, other adults, shop owners etc.).

No not at all.

11. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?

- What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?

If Kokstad had a mall or a place where they could all go and hangout; a place to either go watch a movie or eat out ,other than just a spur, that would definitely attract a lot of youth in Kokstad. She also thinks a few more clothing stores would be awesome so they have some more choices.

## INTERVIEW 10:

PSEUDO NAME: Ant

### QUESTIONS:

1. Ice breaker: I would like to start by finding out a bit about you.

- How old are you?

He is 19 years old.

- What school do you go to?

NA – He finished at a boarding school last year and is currently working.

- What grade are you in?

NA

- What do you enjoy spending your time doing?

He enjoys spending most his time outdoors, either horse riding, fishing, hunting or farming.

- Where do you spend most of your time?

Most of his time is spent on the farm working or out riding; he competes in enduros (long distance horse races) so he trains a lot.

2. If they have not already mentioned hanging out with friends, move the discussion along these lines (if they have then follow it up with these questions):

- When you are with your friends, where do you go?

When he is with his friends they generally just enjoy chilling at someone's house. at his house they usually braai and relax or, if they are feeling up to it, they go out hunting and or camping on the farm, it's a big farm. They also sometimes enjoy driving down to Pietermaritzburg (2 ½ hour one way trip) to go party.

3. Is there any specific reason why you choose to hang out in these places as opposed to somewhere else?

- What characteristics do you enjoy about these places?

They have a lot of freedom in these places, freedom to do what they want and enjoy.

- How is it different to say being at home or school?

To him it's a lot better than being at school.

4. How do other people respond to you being in these places?

- Do they ever have a problem with you being here? (Parents, other adults, shop owners etc.).

No one bothers them out at the farm.

5. If Kokstad were to design a space for the youth to hangout what would you like to see in this place?

- What would make this a place where you and your friends would like to spend time in and why?

There is hardly anything in Kokstad for the youth to enjoy themselves. He isn't a young kid anymore so what he and his friends would really enjoy is something like a proper club where they could go instead of having to drive all the way to Pietermaritzburg.

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